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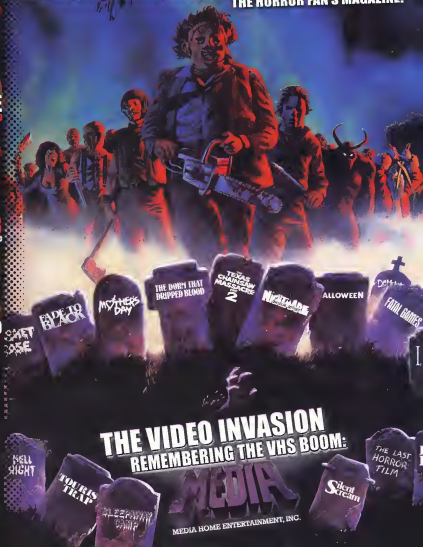
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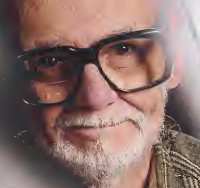
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ON THE COVER: Media Home Entertainment. Thanks to retroslashers.net.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

This is a very special issue of *HorrorHound Magazine*. Since issue #1 we have delivered a mix of current movie news and information with retrospective articles on the films that influenced today's cinema. From consistently covering the video invasion classics of the '80s and '90s to focus features on mondo, 3-D horror, lycanthropic pictures and modern day icons - *HorrorHound* has attempted to create articles we, the writers and staff, have always wanted to see in-print. After 21 issues, with the release of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* - the re-envisioned slasher classic from the mid-'80s (banking off last year's successful run of slasher remakes, including *Friday* the 13th and *My Bloody Valentine 3-D*), we jumped at the chance to deliver an issue dedicated to the '80s slasher boom! From *Friday* the 13th to *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, and to the lesser known titles like *Blood Cult* and *Killer Party*, we wanted to take this opportunity to challenge ourselves in creating a platform to promote the often forgotten body count pictures from this popular subgenre of home viewing horrors, so that they too might receive one last day in the sun.

After months of deliberation, we decided the best way, logistically, to deliver an issue devoted to the films of this era was to produce an A-Z article, dictating one film per letter of the alphabet to represent the slasher craze of the '80s. While some letters proved harder than others (Q and Z, specifically), we got clever and delivered a number of articles within the confines of the idea. Included in this ABCs of the slasher boom we have *Video Invasion* (featuring the highly requested Media Home Entertainment), our regular feature retrospective (this time focusing on 1981's *The Prowler*), and bonus articles on the high school and Christmas slashers of the '80s, a discussion about the zany aspects of the subgenre, and our picks for the 10 most quintessential slashers of the decade - for those Krueger/Vorhees fans. We hope you enjoy this issue. We LOVED writing it!

Nathan Hanneman (Editor-in-Chief)

March/April 2010

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LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Hello, I'm writing you in regard to your wonderful Paul Naschy article published in issue #21. I was rather taken with it. The layout of the photos was especially well done, bringing Naschy's movies to life on the page. I love articles that explore Euro horror when the writing presents the subject in an entertaining and respectful fashion. Jan Kitley was able to give HorrorHound readers insight into the long and millennial career of Paul Naschy. It could not have come at a better time, since Naschy has passed away. Your readers that are fans of Naschy and his work will greatly miss him. But, thanks to publications such as HorrorHound, fans new, old and in between will have a chance to get to know the great works of such a beloved and terrific man. Thanks so much for putting a bit of Paul Naschy's history and works in your magazine. Perhaps you will write a similar article on Jess Franco or look at the works of Joan Rollin.

Rick Snyder, Copenhagen, NY

Hi HorrorHound, I love your magazine. ... I have been getting it from day one right to my door step. I would love to share with you one of the BEST days in my life: the day I met Tom Savini at the Fangoria 30th Horror Convention (Jacob Jovits Center in New York) on 6/6/09. What a cool guy he was. He had signed so many things for me: DVDs, a photo of himself, and the best of all, my arm!! Right after the convention, I went straight to the tattoo shop and had his name forever put in my skin. Here are some of the pics before and after getting it done. Please post this in your magazine. Now that would be the next best day in my life!

Robert Hegman (AKA: Rob Horor)



First off, I want to thank you for identifying everyone in the group shot pull-out poster for issue #20 (last issue). Mystery solved on some of the characters. I loved your horror host feature. Bob Wilkins of Creature Features brought back memories when I lived in San Bruno, I would watch his show, and watch Bob pull out on that I love Elvira, you Bob Shiggs and Count Floyd, some of my favorite horror hosts. As for Labo of Cinema Inconceivable, I know him personally and attend his horror fests that he throws in Sacramento.

Paul Dale Roberts, www.hypernormal.net



Know Your HorrorHound: Joel Robinson (Artist)

What I Do for HorrorHound: I create illustrations for articles and features and anxiously await the call to do a cover.

What I Do Outside of HorrorHound: I am a freelance artist and I run my Web site

www.artpusher.net. I also appear at horror conventions across the United States.

The First Horror Movie I Ever Watched: Staying up late with my mom watching Frankenstein belabored on Shock Theater. Even then I thought Frankenstein's Monster was misandrosed.

My Favorite Collectible: An 18 inch talking Freddy Krueger doll my Grandmother left to me. The fact she bought it new for herself and always displayed it in her home brings a smile to my face.

Craziest Convention Experience: Every convention seems to leave its own unique mark branded in my brain, especially HorrorHound Weekend. I will withhold specifics to protect the innocent.

Who's Your Favorite Artist: Without a doubt, the King of the Monsters, Basil Gogos.

Where Will You be Appearing in 2010?: I will be appearing at 20 shows in 9 states (so far) with lots of horror portraits, shirts and more.

The Disposal: Four bags in March and continues until November.

See all the details at www.artpusher.net/spoonspoon.htm

I just wanted to say thank you for everything you've done with your magazine, it's every horror fan's dream! I really love seeing the Video InVASion section, it brings back great memories seeing all of the old VHS cover art. I was also so happy to see a retrospective on Phantom with all the lost movies and plots. I'm hooked on your magazine, and decided to buy subscriptions of it for all of my horror aficionados friends for Christmas I've also seen the horror lads section which is definitely awesome, so I'm sending a pic of my New Nightmare Freddy tribute (left leg) to you in hopes of it being in an upcoming issue. The artist is Dan Pomille of Sacred Tattoo Studio in Marquette, Michigan. He did an amazing job and the detailing is perfect.



And Horror Fan, Jared William Johnson

And Horror Fan, Jared William Johnson

Thank you for your publication. It's so refreshing to see the amount of thought, passion and detail that you pour into your articles. I was recently given a subscription to your magazine for Halloween from my girlfriend, Eva. It's yet another reason why I love her. This truly is the Horror Fan's Magazine.

Zach Shidewichter

Did no one do research for that top 20 list [HH #20]? It's a lot of mainstream theatrical bullshit. Where's *Martyrs* [one of the most emotionally challenging movies of all time]? Where is *Frontier(s)* (basically a free for all for horror fans)? Behind *The Mask...Cube...Diary of the Dead...Versus...Identity...Seven...Furry Games...Battle Royale*? You guys put 28 Days Later when "Weeks" was far better. It's still that mainstream mentality that kills me. You guys blow!!!!

Nicks

Thanks for the letter Nicks. Some forget that *Shion of the Dead* was not a mainstream title release. It was imported in America in limited release (less than 700 theaters total) ... and that was our #1 pick. Some films seem mainstream because they have large fanbases (mostly stemming from the fact that the films are just REALLY good) *American Psycho*, *House of 1000 Corpses* and *High Tension* saw very limited theatrical release from independent distribution pick-ups, while other films on our list, like *Let the Right One In*, *Inland*, *Thick Y Trest*, *Ju-on*, *REC* and *Meg* were barely screened theatrically (if at all). *Seven* and *Cube* were released prior to 2000 and not included in the article because of this. We appreciate the enthusiasm fans show in reaction to articles such as this. Having fun and prompting discussion is always our intention when creating write-ups and lists. — HH

The HorrorHound Staff

Publisher
JEREMY SHELDON

Editor-in-Chief
NATHAN HANNEMAN

Managing Editor
AARON CROWELL

Writers
SEAN CLARK, JESSICA DWYER, JOHN KITLEY, DAVID ROSANKI, NATE MILLINER, MATT MOORE, KENNETH NELSON, ERIC NEWELL

Copy Editors
JESSICA HANNEMAN, AARON CHRISTENSEN

Artists
TRAVIS FALGOUT, NATE MILLINER, PUTRID, JEFF REHNER, JOEL ROBINSON

Advertising
GARY SHELDON
garysh@horrorhound.com

Contributors
ROBERT ALACORN, ERIC AUSTIN, GREG CHUCK, ARTHUR CULLITHER, NICOLE FALK, RANDY FALK, MICHAEL FISCHER, CLYDE POLLEY, DANIELLE GARNIER, DEV OLMORE, DAMIAN GLOMER, HEIDI HANSEN, JASON HIGHTS, PAUL KAZRO, SCOTT NEFFACH, LARRY NEW, SCOTT NEUMER, ED PETERS, ASHLEY POWELL, DENNIS PRINCE, RICK AT ROCKIN ROOSTER, MELISSA ROMLEY, JOE SENA, JOE WALLACE, the crew from NOTPL, retrofashions, and everyone else who helped, but were unable to be named here.

*All articles written by Aaron Crowell and Nathan Hanneman, unless specifically stated otherwise.

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Ryan Pinter
4th Semester



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- Friday the 13th Final Chapter
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- Day of the Dead
- Creepshow
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BEHIND THE GLOVE: A Nightmare on Elm Street

by Jessica Dwyer

Interviews with Kyle Gallner, Rooney Mara and Jackie Earle Haley



Here we are with our second journey into dreamland. Part 2 of our *A Nightmare on Elm Street* coverage. Last issue focused on the people behind the camera charged with resurrecting our favorite dream slasher. This issue, we turn our attention to the poor souls bringing these venerable characters to life. This past fall I had the opportunity to visit the set and not only check out how this new envision of "Elm Street" was penning out, but to sit down with the cast as well, to discuss their roles in reinventing one of the most recognizable horror franchises of all time.

As everyone knows, the *Elm Street* franchise is one of horror's most popular, and these new actors had some major shoes (and in some cases, a sweater) to fill. For both Jackie Earle Haley and Rooney Mara, the challenge of playing two of the genre's most famous tormentors and final girls lay ahead, with Kyle Gallner stepping into a character comparable to the one played by Johnny Depp in his first major film role. However daunting, this also provided an opportunity for these actors to show what they've got while paying homage to one of the most influential horror films of all time.



Kyle Gallner is no stranger to the world of psychopaths and/or horror. In 2008, he played a young sociopath on TV's *The Shield*, and had to deal with ghosts and demons on the big screen in last year's *The Haunting in Connecticut* and *Jennifer's Body*. He's now facing off with a baddie who could make mincemeat out of Megan Fox: in the form of Freddy Krueger. Gallner plays Quentin, the would-be love interest of Nancy Thompson, who finds herself trapped in a battle against Freddy in the land of dreams. Much like Depp's character, Glen from the 1984 original, Quentin tries to help Nancy in her struggles with "the Gloved One" and his crusade against the children of Elm Street.

During the day I spent on set, Kyle's character was the focus of the scene being filmed. The sequence is very surreal, with Quentin slipping into a dream while thinking he's still in reality.

HorrorHound: What can you tell us about the scene you just shot?

Kyle Gallner: It's in the beginning where I feel like something is going on, but I'm not really sure what. We haven't really figured out that everybody is seeing Freddy in nightmares, so I'm doing some research on sleep deprivation and dreams. I fall asleep, a little girl awakens me... and it all goes downhill from there.

HH: How helpful is Sam [Bayer's] direction?

KG: It's good. [There] are the little things you forget, especially in scenes without dialogue. I mean, it's a very simple scene, but you can always make it more interesting by building the tension — little things like looking around. "The room's empty. It's weird when the girl's waving at you. Why is this little girl waving at you? You should look behind you, maybe her mom's behind you." So it's good to get direction like that, because that's the simple stuff you tend to forget.

HH: Can you describe the worst nightmare you've ever had?

KG: Once, I had a really bizarre nightmare where I was choking. In the dream, my friend sprayed this weird plastic stuff on me that hardened. It started to harden, and I was actually, really, literally choking. I couldn't breathe and I was panicking in my dream. Then suddenly I woke up, and I ripped my pillow away, because I had slept on it funny. My pillow was suffocating me while I was asleep and I couldn't breathe. It was kind of scary.

HH: Have you done sleep deprivation for your role?

KG: I have. I think I did it more in the beginning. Because as soon as the movie starts getting more and more intense, you find yourself needing sleep a little bit more. The first time I auditioned for it, I went in with about two hours of sleep, and the second time I had two hours of sleep as well, just to get the puffy-face, weird, strung-out kind of vibe. There are specific days [and] scenes where I've found it's better to be sleep-deprived. This is day five, so I don't necessarily have to be super tired. But on the days that we shoot [the scenes] at the end of the movie, I try to keep it down to three or four hours of sleep.

HH: So what interests you about your character? What's the hook for you?

KG: I like his dynamic with Nancy. And something else that we almost found on the fly, is that Quentin has these issues with his dad. He finds out about his past through other people, which really sparks issues with his father. It's almost like he's got a little bit of an anger problem, which can potentially be suppressed. In the script I don't have a mom, so I built in the fact that I lost my mom and that my dad's kind of cold. So our relationship isn't very good.

HH: Your character is sort of like the Glen character in the original, but it seems like Nancy is more of a loner in this one. So do you two have a relationship that builds throughout the film?

KG: Absolutely. The draw of the role was the relationship with me and Nancy, because it's one of those things where we're kind of anti-heroes. We're not your typical horror movie heroes. I'm the kid who had a crush on her, but she's always kind of been by herself... we're thrown into this crazy situation which actually brings us together very quickly, because we don't really have any other choice. We can only rely on each other, so we're kind of victims of circumstance, but it's something we both might have potentially wanted before this.





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The role of Nancy Thompson is considered by many fans as iconic as that of Jamie Lee Curtis' turn as Laurie Strode in *Halloween*. A smart, virtuous girl (and the only one that knows the truth of what's happening in Springwood), Nancy has to find the inner strength to battle a creature literally out of her own nightmares.

Having done mostly TV work, the closest actress Rooney Mara has come to the world of horror before "*Nightmare*" was her small part in *Urban Legends: Bloody Mary*. But after conversing with the "new Nancy," it's clear this girl has a great career ahead of her, and she's going to enjoy every minute of it.

HorrorHound: What have your dreams been like since you started filming?

Rooney Mara: I'm not going to lie. I've been having really weird, crazy dreams, especially when we had a month of night shoots. All of us were hallucinating, having weird dreams, and we'd call each other in the middle of the night. I can't remember them, but I've been having really weird dreams.

HH: Are you a fan of the original series?

RM: I saw the first *Nightmare* - I was way too young, maybe 12 years old, and it scared me. Time's death just freaked me out. I saw that and I was like, "Oh my God!" I haven't seen it since. I want to wait until we're finished, and then I'm going to watch them all. I've only seen the first one, but I did love it. When I was younger I loved horror movies; I used to watch all of them.

HH: A lot of remakes aren't that great. What makes this one different?

RM: The cast? [Laughs] No, really, a lot of the remakes - I haven't actually seen any of them, but I heard that they're bad. I think they just do them to make money, but they don't really take their time in casting them right and making them right. It's just an easy way to make money. I don't think that they've done that [on this film] - all the locations are amazing and terrifying, the cast is really going to help make the characters, so that when they die it's not just like some stupid teenagers getting slaughtered. We've tried to develop the characters so people actually care about them; they're real characters, real people.

HH: The original Nancy was almost like a cross between Rambo and Macaulay Culkin in *Home Alone*. Is there some of that aspect to your character in this film?

RM: There's some Rambo. But it's definitely a lot different from the original Nancy. I love my character. The way they wrote her for this movie, it's one of the main reasons I wanted to do it. She's really interesting, she's dark and basically has no friends in high school - she's really quiet and kind of scared. Then throughout the film, we watch her progress until she ... I don't know how much I can talk about that without giving stuff away. Jackie is also bringing his own thing to it. I think it's less comedic and more creepy/serious. But there's still definitely comedy in Freddy.

HH: Up to this point, what's been the most intense scene?

RM: I don't know about the most intense, but I know what the most painful was. We had to do this scene with the motion control camera, which was just awful because we had to do it in two different locations, for the nightmare part and the reality part. And I'm like a crab crawling backwards and my arms were bleeding and bruised. It's really hard when you have to be terrified of ... a stick.

HH: Did you reach out at all to Heather Langerkamp - or did you want to?

RM: No. I would definitely love to sit down and talk to her after we finish, for sure. But I think it's so different ... definitely afterwards.

HH: The first *Nightmare* led to many sequels. How interested would you be in coming back to this character a few more times?

RM: I love this character. I would definitely want to play her again. I don't know how long she would survive. How long can you stay awake?

HH: Do you have a favorite scene or one you're most proud of so far?

RM: I don't know. There have been so many. Every scene has been intense - crying, screaming, emotional. Every single day it's been extremely draining.

HH: How do you do that? How do you keep up that level of energy?

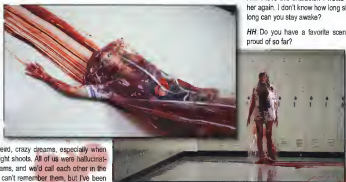
RM: Cigarettes and not sleeping? [Laughs] All my stuff with Jackie has been really amazing. I'm really proud of that. Jackie's the sweetest man I've ever met. He's so easy to work with, he's so giving as an actor. He makes it fun. We'll do something really creepy and intense, and then he'll say something totally inappropriate to break the ice. We had to do one thing where he was doing something inappropriate. You know how Freddy thinks that Nancy's his girlfriend? "You're my girlfriend now." We joke around about that a lot, about how the sequel should be *The Bride of Freddy*.

HH: Have you filmed the bathtub scene yet?

RM: No, we have not. [Laughs] I do have a bathroom on the stage, but you'll have to wait and find out. I'm not sure if it'll be utilized the way that you think it will be, but one can only hope.

HH: Nancy's considered one of the strongest heroines in horror. Did you feel intimidated at all, and do you see yourself going down in history as one of the strongest horror heroines?

RM: God, I hope so. I don't think of myself like that. But yeah, I definitely was intimidated, because in my audition they had to really work to see that in me. We did a scene the other day where I had to go from weak to strong in a second, and I definitely surprised myself. A noise came out of me, a strong scream, that I did not know I could make. We haven't filmed the end yet, but I plan on kicking ass.



NEWS BITS



Last but not least, the man behind the glove... Literally. Jackie Earle Haley has been riding a wave of newfound popularity thanks to an Oscar-nominated turn as a child molester in 2008's *Little Children* and an epic performance in last year's *Watchmen* as Rorschach, the tortured anti-hero. Haley's got a new TV series on tap of everything else, *Human Target*, but it's his turn as Freddy Krueger that everyone wants to know about.

Haley's name was one of the first to be thrown about the Internet when word of the remake was released, with many fans declaring that - if they couldn't get Robert Englund - they didn't want anyone other than Haley under the teen makeup and fedora.

When I interviewed Jackie on set, he was in full-on makeup, having just finished filming his scenes with Kyle and a number of very young children. It was pretty disconcerting to hear such a nice, pleasant voice coming out of a

face that looked like it had been melted. Security was so intense that when he left the set, he had to be draped in a monk's hooded robe and have two men with giant blank umbrellas walking on either side of him for the six feet to get to the car that would take him to his trailer. For the record, the effect of Haley as Freddy is impressive, worthy of following in Englund's bloody wake.

HorrorHound What are your dreams like during the production?

Jackie Earle Haley That's a good question. I don't think I've had any remarkable dreams to report, or any movie dreams. But I am one of those guys - unless I wake up and tell you my dream, within the first two breaths it leaves.

HH Tell us about working with the small kids under that makeup - did you prepare them ahead of time?

JEH Yeah, this morning [assistant director] Stefan and Andrew went over to where the kids were at school, and ran them through a little slide presentation of the process of going through the makeup, so that they could see [how it was done]. I went over to where they were all doing school, and joked around with them for a little while. At first, we thought we were convincing them. We were like, "This is like a Halloween costume, just a very high-end one." For the most part, everybody was pretty good, but one of the little girls looked at me and just started crying.

HH How helpful is the makeup, practical versus having it all digital, in terms of bringing the character to life? If in 20 years you played this role again and they said, "We're doing this all digital." Would it make any difference to you?

JEH Yeah, a lot. Acting is a weird process. Sometimes it's hard to describe. The makeup is very uncomfortable. I'm getting more and more used to it, but it's very confining and very constricted. My vision is fuzzy when my head's encased. Then they put the blades on this hand. After that, they put contacts in - I can't really see out of one eye,

plus in theaters this spring, the *Alexander* Apia remake of *Panther* has been pushed back to an August 27th release date, to help separate its 3-D feature film competition and to take advantage of the already proven weekend in which *The Fast Outrigger* opened last year to amazing numbers.

Soon after Paramount announced Kevin Greutert (the director of *Saw V*) would be helming the upcoming *Paranormal Activity* sequel (which ironically is scheduled for release on October 22nd, the same day as *Saw VI*), Lionsgate fired back by optioning Kevin's directorial contract - stipulating that Lionsgate can force Kevin to direct the next installment of *Saw* - thus forcing him away from the *Paranormal* project. Scheduled to be filmed in 3-D, *Saw VI* was pegged to be shot by David Hackl (*Saw V*). No news on who will step into the vacant *Paranormal Activity* job, but the film is still scheduled to open on time.

Kevin Williamson has reportedly finished the first draft of his highly-anticipated *Screen 4* script, which is set to reunite Wes Craven (director) with stars Neve Campbell, Courtney Cox and David Arquette. While a start date has yet to be set for filming, Kevin has also been attached to write *Screen 5*, pending this new installment's success. Since the last *Screen* installment, Williamson has been hard at work creating such films and TV series as *Cursed* and *The Virgin Diaries*.

Continued lack of *Ghostbusters 3* has revealed that Ivan Reitman will direct with all major cast members returning (including Bill Murray and Sigourney Weaver). The proposed story will revolve around a new team baring over as the *Ghostbusters* (a plot device they've been circulating for 10-plus years). The project has a tentative 2011 release date, and will possibly be filmed in 3-D.

More 3-D news about a beloved '80s film series returning to cinemas involves Joe Dante's *Gremlins*. Dante's *The Howl* sees release this fall, and while all news regarding *Gremlins* return should be considered solely rumor at this point, it would be hard to imagine the film directed by anyone else.

In a surprise move Columbia Pictures announced that, due to artistic disagreements, Sam Raimi has left the *Spider-Man* franchise, which subsequently will be relaunched in 2012 with a new director and cast - returning Peter Parker to his high school roots. While Raimi is currently in development on *Wrecked* (based on the hit video game series), with *Spider-Man* out of his way, the Internet has been buzzing at the idea that *Evil Dead*'s much anticipated relaunch is closer to happening than ever!

Coppos has been hard at work on a *Dead Rising* movie, based on the hit video game. Set (and filmed) in Japan, look for the movie to premiere on XBOX Live this fall!

HENRY
Portrait of a Serial Killer
in
3D

THIS IS GETTING OUT OF CONTROL



because it's milky. If all of that's going on while I'm playing Fred, I might as well use it. I'm not exactly sure how or why, but in terms of playing Freddy there's this whole feeling going on. Could I do it without it? Sure I could, but right now it's all starting to become this one whole thing for me. It's hard to explain.

HH: When we talked to the gentleman who did the makeup, he said you already knew what you were going to do with the role, even more before you got the makeup on. What did you do for research to get in the mindset of the character?

JEH: Well, that's not altogether true. I think I found a lot of it once I got the makeup on. I watched the first *Nightmare*. I've seen a bunch of things on YouTube and stuff from the other movies. Sam sent me *Morferatu* to take a look at, and I thought that was fascinating. I started to look into serial killers for a while, and I thought that was fascinating. But while it was informative, I realized this isn't really the place to go delving into that whole mindset. I think I'm playing more of a boogymen, and it took me a little while to realize that. At the same time, I still want to bring a truthful quality to the guy. It's thinking about it, just playing with it, letting it kind of ruminate, and things just start to happen.

HH: How big a decision was this for you to want to do another makeup role, and to play an iconic character that somebody else had played before you?

JEH: The first thing I heard was when the fans on the Internet were saying, "Hey, this guy would be right for this role." I immediately went, "Hmmm..." I didn't know they were getting ready to do it again, and I kind of got excited about it. Then the agents and the producers started doing their thing back and forth. It's a little scary, this super-iconic character that one guy has played. But at the same time, it's this super-iconic character. And I had to do it. You've just gotta do it. It's too cool. [Laughs.] It's a little scary, but what a great role to play. I've had such crazy luck in my life. Kelly Leak [from 1978's *The Bad News Bears*] became an iconic character. And Rorschach was super-iconic. This is my third iconic character, so it's unbelievable.

HH: How is your approach on this character different... is it different?

JEH: I think a lot of what we're doing is paying homage to the first film. I think the biggest thing is just trying to set it a little darker, a little scarier. Less comedy, less campy, more frightening... but at the same time making sure that we're still within the *A Nightmare on Elm Street* world. We don't want to veer too far away; we want to re-envision it to where it's new, yet still within this great story that everybody loved.

HH: What does the makeup feel like?

JEH: Itchy. It's like if you took a bunch of silicone appliances and glued them to your head. [Laughs.] I don't even know how to describe it.

HH: How does it compare with the mask [Rorschach]?

JEH: The mask was just awesome. "Give me back the mask!" That thing, it was kind of maddening, because you got the mascot and all that stuff, and I'd put it on, and sometimes it would stay on for a while, and it would get hot and fuzzy in there.

But then all that stuff would come off whereas [the makeup] goes on and that's it. We've had days where I'm getting into makeup for four hours, and then we shoot for another 14. It's kind of like the whole Rorschach experience, except the thing won't come off until they say, "Wrap."

HH: You're also playing the pre-Freddy, without the makeup. Aside from the makeup and everything, is it a different characterization for you?

JEH: I think so. It's this guy before this evolution. It's Freddy in the real world, in this life. It's much different. They're definitely related, but it seems to me once he died and the demons came and they struck a deal, some weird stuff happened.

HH: As Rorschach, people cared about that character, even though he was a nut job in a lot of ways. People were very sympathetic towards him, especially at the end. Have you brought some sympathy to Freddy as a character?

JEH: I don't know. I'm not even sure we want to do that. Staying within the genre, which to me is like a campfire story. That's what it represents. Staying true to that genre, and yet to humanize this guy, to have there be a little bit of reality with what his background was, what caused him to become Freddy... it's a little more grounded than it was before. It's this wonderful balance of trying to bring some truth to this guy—a sickening whacked-out truth—with this world of the genre and the campfire story. Putting the two together and having it resonate, so that we care a little more and so that we're scared a little bit more.

HH: Do you personally have sympathy for the character?

JEH: It's not an unfair question. You should almost always have sympathy for your character to some degree, or at least be able to find it somewhere. It doesn't mean wholeheartedly, but there needs to be a piece of you that can kind of sympathize and understand your character, especially when your character is so despicable. The more I think about it, I think my answer comes in playing the scenes. It's like, I gotta understand where he's coming from in that brief moment between "action" and "cut." I've gotta live that, and understand it and agree with it, you know what I mean? But it's hard to sympathize with this guy.



HH: Can you see yourself doing a sequel?

JEH: They've got me for a few.

HH: Do you have a favorite on-screen Boogymen?

JEH: I was never a big horror fan. In this particular genre, *A Nightmare on Elm Street* was my particular fave, though because it had more depth to it. I saw it in a theater, and the concept actually intrigued me. I enjoyed it, I thought it was really cool. In and around that time, I think probably my favorite stuff was Sam Rami's stuff, the *Evil Dead*. That guy just came out of that gate and did some cool stuff.

HH: What's your favorite scene that you've shot?

JEH: The pharmacy sequence. That's all I'm saying. [Laughs]

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GIRL NUMBER THREE

by Aaron Crowell



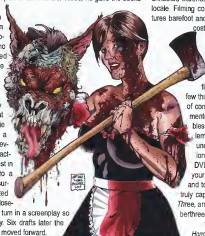
In the last decade Hollywood and cinema at large has had great success adapting comic books into blockbuster films. This refreshing form of original source material has proven itself to the mainstream as a force to be reckoned with. The horror genre has always known the value of this medium with titles such as *Tales from the Crypt* and Marvel's vampire killer *Blade* both appearing as hit films and TV series. Let us also not forget *Slove Niles 30 Days of Night*, and to a lesser extent, *Trailer Park of Terror*. So when an independent filmmaker chooses to release his feature film based on an independently produced comic book you know you are in for a real treat. *Girl Number Three* follows Max Carpenter, a young woman who is kidnapped on Halloween day in a parking lot after purchasing a French-maid costume for a party she planned to attend that night. Only a group of cultists have bigger plans for her and the nine other women who have also been taken hostage and transported to a textile factory. Can the women survive their night of terror and what is to become of them?



Girl Number Three - The Comic:

The book was originally penned in 2006 as a daydream-style screenplay for a low budget film effort which writer/artist Nate Milliner hoped to possibly produce and film one day. Milliner was also writing and drawing a zombie-themed comic book story that was to be released as part of an anthology comic book by Feral Comics to debut at a Nashville comic event. Sadly, the comic was never released and Milliner chose instead to produce his written homage to George A. Romero's "Dead" films and W.W. Jacobs' *The Monkey's Paw* (titled *A Wish for the Dead*) on his own. Since the story was quite short, as it was only written to appear as a segment in an anthology comic, so it needed a companion piece to carry it. Milliner decided to pair it with an existing piece of his, *Girl Number Three*, which became the title of the book that "Wish" appeared in. A company named Comixpress, known for producing limited run comic books, was hired by Milliner to produce the book with a run of only 50 copies. Soon after, Milliner's wife began having some life threatening health issues, and he decided it was not the best time to proceed with the book, and immediately contacted the company to cancel the printing of the book. The owner of Comixpress, upon hearing why Nate needed to pull production, graciously printed 20 copies of the book as a gift for the struggling artist, a gesture of kindness that Nate says, "I will never forget." As he did not have to pay for the copies of *Girl Number Three*, he gave the books

to fellow co-workers at his day job (at UPS) who have both motivated and supported him in his endeavors. One of those co-workers was Herschel Zahnd who took the book home and discussed with his wife Mary Ellen Riehl, the prospect of releasing the story as their debut film effort. Zahnd and Riehl had been working in theatre and in the haptid industry for several years and had great admiration for the horror movie genre and saw this project as a realistic challenge that was achievable. Within 24 hours they contacted Nate and revealed their interest in turning *Girl Number Three* into a movie - much to his shock and surprise. On top of that, they wanted the film to match the comic as closely as possible, asking Milliner to turn in a screenplay so as to not deviate from the story. Six drafts later the script was ready and production moved forward.



Girl Number Three - The Movie:

The screenplay and story were influenced by films such as *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *The Hills Have Eyes* and *High Tension* - and the horror movie survival films based around the "final girl" convention found in most slasher films from the '80s. The first challenge was casting the crew of sinister and mysteriously masked cult members and other ancillary characters for the film. Herschel Zahnd and Mary Ellen began production under their new company titled Renegade Art Productions, casting the needed roles using actors they knew and had worked with in theatre productions prior. All that was left to do was to cast the all-important role of Max Carpenter (or Girl Number Three). Milliner, of course, was involved heavily in this process as he wanted to ensure the perfect actress was cast for this pivotal role in the film. Auditions were held with the assistance of Zahnd's friend, Julie Streble, who read lines with actresses who tried out for the role. In the end, Streble herself auditioned and won the part after displaying great acting talent with a commanding inner-presence that was needed for the role of Max. Milliner also revealed, "In a strange coincidence, she not only had the personality of Max, but actually looked like my drawings too!" The bulk of the movie was filmed over the frigid months of January and February of 2009. Due to some unforeseen issues involving the location of the shoot, two unheated warehouses in Louisville, Kentucky quickly became the picture's new locale. Filming commenced with Streble suffering through bitter cold temperatures barefoot and in nothing more than a blood-stained, tattered French-maid costume, earning the respect of her fellow cast members and driving the film forward like a pro. As the film was to mimic the comic book, it was released in black and white, with scenes filmed as close to the mere 20 illustrations found in the novella-style book, as it did not follow the standard panel-to-panel format found in most mainstream comics. Once the filming was complete, it became clear the movie was missing a few things to make it work cinematically, as an additional 20 minutes of content was worked in. Reshoots resumed on which Nate commented, "Everything that went wrong during filming seemed to be a blessing in disguise, it only made the film stronger once the problems were fixed." He is also planning to re-release the comic book under his company Rebel Rouser Comics with a movie companion piece later in 2010. As far as the exploitation-style poster and DVD art is concerned, one might have guessed that Max is not your typical horror movie heroine. Remember, when you come and torment a frightened animal, only then do you learn what it is truly capable of. Don't believe me, purchase a copy of *Girl Number Three*, and find out for yourself. Available now on DVD at www.girlnumberthree.com.

"Editor's Note: Nathan Milliner is a freelance writer and artist for HorrorHound Magazine"

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TROMA GOES HIGH-DEF

Blu-ray sales have peaked thanks to a lowered retail price on BD players and an increase in HD television purchases. Everyone is jumping on the new high-def bandwagon and while the quality in picture, sound and bonus materials has created quite a controversy among some circles, the excitement surrounding vintage title releases onto the BD format is at an all-time high! It was quite the surprise, however, when Troma revealed that they were about to make the big jump into HD! With Poultrygeist's BD premiere this past February, Troma has been announcing title after title - including such '80s gems as *Surf Nazis Must Die* and *Class of Nuke 'Em High*. Not to mention the oddball slasher *Pep Squad* and '90s cult classic *Tromeo and Juliet*. With the exception of *Dark Nature*, which was shot in HD and won awards for Best Director and Best Cinematography at HOFest, all of the Blu-ray releases were remastered from the original camera negatives with uncompressed audio. Some may wonder if Tromeo's films were shot in a manner that is transferable to HD format, but keep in mind that every feature that Lloyd Kaufman directed was shot in 35mm, the ideal format for Blu-ray presentations.



Bonus features to be included in these films are as follows: *Surf Nazis Must Die* - new commentary, interviews with cast and crew, lost scenes of surf mayhem, director observations and trailer, *Class of Nuke 'Em High* - audio commentaries, new interviews, lost scenes original trailer and *Tromaville Café* TV show, *Pep Squad* - feature length documentary about the trials of making *Pep Squad*, commentary track, and *Tromeo and Juliet* - four audio commentaries, deleted scenes, fan reenactments, interviews with the cast and crew, video diary of James Gunn, and *Gettng Hostel with Hollywood*: James Gunn and Lloyd Kaufman visit Eli Roth's birthday party.



10 QUESTIONS WITH Ti West

by Kenny Helman

Every issue of *HorrorHound* we try to track down a director in hopes of asking them a series of 10 seemingly random (and most times stupid) questions. This issue we had the opportunity to speak with the director of the exciting new features, *The House of the Devil* and *Cabin Fever 2* - Ti West! Here is the result ... 10 Random Questions

HorrorHound: What's the best on-set prank you've ever fallen victim to?

Ti West: I got about six gallons of blood dumped over my head, like those sort of Gatorade cooler type things, one time. I knew it was coming, but there was nothing I could do about it. So, I thought that was a pretty good one.

HH: Would you ever let someone else make a sequel to one of your films?

TW: Chances are it's probably not my decision to make. So I guess, yes.

HH: What's your all-time favorite film score?

TW: *Back to the Future* is probably my favorite film score.

HH: What film did you watch repeatedly as a child?

TW: *The Karate Kid*.

HH: Has the Internet become a more significant marketing tool than television?

TW: Probably. I don't think it's as effective yet, although it's probably more significant. I think TV spots still probably drive more people in because there are a lot of people who watch TV and people visually see things. But as far as significant and as far as the future, yeah, the Internet wins.

HH: If you were forced to make a sequel to an existing horror franchise, which one would you choose?

TW: Oh, I already made that mistake.



HH: Do you think we'll ever see another horror film win an Oscar for Best Picture?

TW: Horror? Probably not. I think if they can call it a thriller or if it's a movie that's not particularly violent, things like that could be. I think there is a stigma that horror movies are the lowest common denominator and they're lesser than. If the movie has a really famous movie star in it, and is directed by a very respected filmmaker, and is not overly violent, then yes, I think it's possible. None of that is the right reasoning, but that's why it would happen. If Steven Spielberg made a horror movie with Tom Cruise and Julia Roberts and it was good, that could be nominated. But if the same movie is made with two unknown people by an unknown filmmaker, no way. People need that to say "OK, we're gonna accept this" - they need some sort of validation.

HH: Do you think wide release theatrical films will ever be available through Video on Demand within the same day?

TW: Yeah, I do.

HH: What is one horror film you are a big fan of that you feel has never gotten the love it deserves?

TW: Probably, *The Changeling*.

HH: You're stuck in a house occupied by a satanic cult that is being attacked by killer bats, all while infected with a flesh-eating virus - what do you do to pass the time?

TW: I'd go hunting. It's the only movie you left out, the movie I made about people going hunting. So, I'd go hunting.

Be sure to check out *The House of the Devil* and *Cabin Fever 2* - now available on DVD and Blu-ray!



CHOICE CUTS:

HORROR ON DVD

BLU-RAY

Many integrated extras are getting in the habit of releasing Blu-rays, such as those with their opening releases (opposite page). Also on tap for later this year: *Blue Underground's* *The Gruesome* and *Vampyr*, plus *Shout! Factory's* new-edition edition of *Phantoms* (1997, recently pushed back to late summer).



The "Grindhouse-meets-Sun City" hybrid known as *Bitch Slap* finally hits DVD March 2nd. *Letter* will include a commentary by producers Rick Jacobson, Eric Grandmeyer and Brian Beck, a second commentary track with the cast, a "Building a better 8-tracks" documentary and much more!



On February 23rd, the twisted Nordic film crewers come looking for their gold in the middle of a snow-covered mountainside where five friends are enjoying vacation that soon turns violent as backslaps of blood pour out of this 2-disc special edition DVD, packed with tons of bonus features!



DVD cover art for the sequel to *Ned Marshall's* *The Descent* was unveiled just prior to our print date. Expected to ship on April 27th, the film continues the story of Sarah Carter, who after surviving the incident from the first film, returns with a local sheriff to determine the fate of her missing companions.



After *Dark Horrorfest* returns (for their fourth year) to DVD this March 23rd with a new set of horror tales. *Crime Barker's* *Dead* tops off an impressive list that also includes *The Final*, *The Roadie*, *Hilltop*, *The Graves*, *100 Theory*, *Lake Mungo* and *Zombes of Mass Destruction*.



The Milla Jovovich "Personal Activity" meets *For in the Sky* alien abduction flick, *The Fourth Kind*, hits DVD and Blu-ray both on March 18th thanks to Universal Home Entertainment. Unfortunately, as of press date, no bonus features for either disc release have been revealed.



The long out-of-print and pricey DVD of Joe Dante's much overlooked tale to William Castle, *Matinee*, is set for release on May 4th! Starring John Goodman as a *Candle-Opus* filmmaker looking to premiere his new film in the middle of America. One of 80s schlock should pick this one up!



While Warner Bros. prepares to relaunch the *Nightmare* as *Elm Street* film series on April 6th - just in time for the new film - they have opted to release the original eight films in this new box set, confusingly, for some unknown reason featuring Jackie Carter Haley's image of Freddy on the cover.



Smash Cut, the new film from Mark Boalster, starring *Dead Head*, Michael Biehn and *Harvard* *Geordie* Lewis, hits DVD on March 18th. The movie follows a camp director who realizes the "XX" on his film aren't cutting it, resulting in a kill-spree to find some accurate people for his on-screen horror.



For those of us who missed it during its theatrical run, on February 23rd fans will be able to pick up the DVD and BD releases of *Sorority Row*. Bonus features to be included in the '80s slasher reboot include scenes, shower rehearsal, "No Switch" trailers and stories from the set.



If this remake is remembered for anything, it's that it finally got the original *Stepfather* released on DVD after 10 years of fan demand! Now available, this Dylan Wither red features a cast and crew commentary, trailers and a gag reel. A BD version is also available.



CBS/Paramount announced that the third season of *Tales from the Darkside* is coming to DVD on April 27th. This 3-disc set (with a running time of 470 minutes) will retail for \$35.98 and features two episodes written by creator George Romero and a John G. Cooney season finale.



Universal Home Video will finally release *Tremors* The TV Series in a complete series box set. Starring Michael Gross and Maria Strassman, this 3-disc box will include all 13 episodes from this beloved 2003 Sci-Fi Channel series. Look for the set to hit retail stores on March 9th.



HBO Home Entertainment announced the release date for their open-aired vampire television program, *True Blood*. All 12 episodes of this second-season will be collected over five discs and will be available on both DVD and Blu-ray concurrently on May 25th. Bonus features will also be included.



Anyone who grew up in the '80s can attest that while *the film* isn't exactly horror - as some fans have enough affection for this title to lend it coverage! *The Wraith* hits DVD in SE format on March 2nd, complete with director commentary, interviews with Clint Howard, Mike Marvin and more!



Now available, starring Kenny James, Michael Emerson and Michael Northen (and directed by Ryan Thompson) *Zombie Apocalypse* from *Evil One Media*, this DVD includes deleted scenes, commentary tracks, the archival trailer and a bonus comic book for the collectors!



City of the Living Dead hits Blu-ray on May 26th and will include interviews with the stars, a "Memories of the Movies" photo book, a making-of *City of the Living Dead* featurette, poster and still gallery, 2-disc DVD - two discs that they receive the majority of the critical.



On February 26th, the *Sakura* *Milla* stars *Ichi the Killer* hits Blu-ray only on BD! From Tokyo Shock, the film will be presented in an uncut format and will include over two hours of bonus features (including director commentary, 16 both featurettes and more).



April 6th sees the release of *A Nightmare on Elm Street* on Blu-ray. Extras will include "Freddy Freddy Focus Point" with interviews and behind-the-scenes, two commentaries (including Wes Craven and the cast), varied footage and more features.

HORRORHOUND BEST OF 2009!

Last issue we presented our annual "Best of" voting, in which we ask you, the reader, to submit your choices for the best film (including theatrical [original], theatrical (remake/sequel) and limited release (time-to-video), as well as best acting, directing and gore found in the dozens of films presented over 2009 - as well as best costumed (including comics and DVD). In a heated battle, this was one of the closest decisions on all three categories, and easily one of the better selections of prospects since HorrorHound's inception. With films such as *Zombieland*, *Let the Right One In* and *Last House on the Left* literally on the heels of this year's winners, we are excited to present HorrorHound Magazine's Best of 2009 result:



BEST MOVIE: DRAG ME TO HELL



BEST MOVIE: MY BLOODY VALENTINE 3-D



BEST MOVIE: UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS



BEST DVD: SAW IV

DRAG ME TO HELL **MY BLOODY VALENTINE 3-D** **TRACK 'N' TREAT** **NIGHT OF THE CREEPS**



BEST DIRECTOR: ROB MARSHALL



BEST ACTOR: WOODY (TOY STORY)



BEST ACTRESS: TINEKE (CABBAGE PATCH KIDS)



BEST GORE: MATPISS



BEST TV SERIES: THE MENTALIST



BEST GAME: HALO



BEST COSTUME: THE WALKING DEAD

AT THE BOX OFFICE!

1. TWILIGHT: NEW MOON (2009) (PG-13)

2. PARANORMAL ACTIVITY 2 (2009)

3. ZOMBIELAND (2009)

4. THE FINAL DESTINATION (2009)

5. FRIDAY THE 13TH (2009)

6. THE HUNTING IN CONNECTICUT (2009)

7. MY BLOODY VALENTINE 3-D (2009)

8. UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS (2009)

9. THE MACHINIST (2009)

10. DRAG ME TO HELL (2009)

My Bloody Valentine 3-D, Underworld: Rise of the Lycans and The Uninvited, made an incredible \$100 million plus!

Horror took a bit of a hit near the end of summer going into the fall as Halloween 2 was demolished by The Final Destination (which was the highest grossing installment of the "FD" series, with huge thanks to its 3-D format). After those two monster franchises opened on the same weekend, smaller budget horror entries, such as *Sorority Row*, *Paranormal* and *Jennifer's Body*, all failed to gain interest at the box office. In fact, if it wasn't for surprise hits like *Zombieland* and *Paranormal Activity* (both widely available in October), the horror genre would have ended on only one sold note: *Twilight*.

Sure, no self-respecting horror fan acknowledges it as legit horror - but it does boast "vampires" and werewolves. The final tally on the year's top 10 horror hits was just shy of \$850 million - not counting borderline titles such as *Twins*, *Salvation* (\$125.3 million), *Corrine* (\$79.3mm), *Monsters vs. Aliens* (\$196.4mm) and *Where the Wild Things Are* (\$75.5mm) - whose monster-influenced films attributed to \$475 million at the box office on their own.

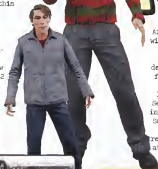
Titles that failed to break the top 10 grossing of the year included *Orphan* (which was edged out of the top 10 having made an impressive \$41.4 million), *Halloween 2* (\$33.4 - \$25 million shy of its predecessor) and *Last House on the Left* (\$32.8mm) and *Saw IV*, which pulled in a lackluster \$27.7mm, nearly \$30mm less than *Saw V*. If *Saw* and *Halloween* performed as well as their previous entries - an additional combined \$65mm could have been attributed to the box office for 2009! All in all, this was quite a good year for horror and proves the genre is recession proof.



Bif Bang Pow! Twilight Zone bobble head series continues with the release of Talking Tina (she really talked) and the announcement of the iconic Greenlin - in stores this April!

TOY NEWS

Below a number of new NECA products have been hitting toy stands, including an impressive number of Twilight Zone action figures, the continuation of Terminator 2 (more figures are planned) and the single-figure release of Perseus from Clash of the Titans.



Are you ready for Freddy? NECA will be ushering in two figures based on the remake of "Flea Street" - pre and post fiery death versions of Krueger. Look for both to street in conjunction with the new film. Also look for Cult Classics Icons Series 2, available soon and to include Jason (Creddy vs. Jason), Sam (Crick 'R Treat), David (East Boys) and Beetlejuice. This repack series will be available at Toys "R" Us for an outstanding \$10 retail!



ACTION FIGURE	NECA TOYS
	HH #22 2010 TOY NEWS
	A Nightmare on Elm Street
	Remake 7" figures
	Available this April
	via online retailers and select outlets, including Toys "R" Us.

Mezco continues to push horror products via their popular Living Dead Dolls and Mezitz toy lines. Shown at right are Beetlejuice versions of both toys, as well as a new property of in-house designed zombies for the vinyl Mezitz toy line.



ACTION FIGURE	MEZCO TOYZ
	HH #22 2010 TOY NEWS
	The Wolfman 7" and 12" Action Figures
	Now available at retail.
	Bloody variant wolf exclusive to Blockbuster video stores.

SIDESHOW COLLECTIBLES

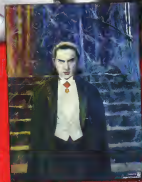
HH #22 2010 TOY NEWS

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

Throne of the Slayer Statue

Available in the fall with
a SRP of \$239.99, exclusively at
www.sideshowcollectibles.com.

On top of the amazing Buffy the Vampire Slayer statue shown at right, Sideshow Collectibles has a number of exciting products available (or now-sold-out) online. Included in their import Terminator 2 T-800 figure from Hot Toys, a couple fun new Gremlins figures from Jun Planning and a Dr. Horrible maquette, based on the Joss Whedon musical starring Neil Patrick Harris (Google Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog and enjoy).



Painted and signed by Robert Aragon, this fully licensed 900 piece Braucula art print measures 18x24" and is currently available online at www.Aragonartstudio.com.



殺し屋1

KOROSHICHA 1

THE KILLER KAKIHARA

12" FIGURE

Available via import: Medicon's impressive Ichi the Killer Kakihara 12" figure. Also available: Ichi.



THE HORROR'S SOUNDS

by Aaron Crowl

In the '60s death metal was confined to the underground, and unlike those milking corpses reeling peacefully in their graves, the brand of music vomited forth the wildest vocals and fastest thrash metal. One band has always played tribute to the twisted vice undead that feasts on the flesh of the living, the death metal legends: Doomed. First formed in '84 by drummer/bassist King Fowley and former member Doug Souther, the band boasts seven albums to date, all of which present a myriad "dedication" to the march of the cadavers found in horror cinema. Available for the first time since its original release in 1991 (via Relapse Records), Hells Headbangers Records has just released *Look Of The Corpses* as a creepy new picture disc. This LP features restored artwork taken from the 1963 Mino Bano film *Black Sabbath* with insert and foil printed hard-board black jacket cover, and remasters tracks primarily unaltered from '95 to '99! We recently had a chance to catch up with horror film guru, *Volited* fanatic and long time *Ward of King Fowley*, to ask a few quick questions regarding Doomed's past, present and future!



In Respect of Chas Balun by Dave Kosanke

When Chas Balun published *The Gore Score* back in 1985, the horror community would never be the same again. Here was a slim little tome that reviewed horror films with an emphasis on how much blood was spilled that gave fans extra incentive to seek out the good and the gory! Chas went on to write *Horror Holocaust*, which was another eye opener to fans who didn't know *Ludwig* or *Cannibal Holocaust*, but Chas was there to give this stuff the attention it deserved when hardly anyone else even cared or knew. When Chas tackled the 'zine world, the result was *Deep Red*. This seminal magazine again opened up the floodgates as many unsung and unheard of artists from the horror world were given their just due. The novel *Ninth and Hell Street* pushed the splatter-punk boundaries further than most were willing to go. Chas even found time to write a regular column in *Gorezone*.



Magazine, which brought his unique wit and humor to an even larger audience. Chas went on to contribute much more to the horror world than simply words, his artwork adorned the cover of many music albums throughout the years, and his T-shirt designs are still seen at many horror conventions to this day. Chas remained steadfast in his love for the genre, and equally vocal in his disgust at the talentless hacks that also populated its ranks. On December 18th, 2009 Chas departed this world. Yet his legacy will last; his passion transcends the printed page and has inspired numerous filmmakers to go on to develop their own chunk-blowers that delivered the groceries, along with a few that even managed to suck the farts out of dead cats! Rest in peace, Bro!



HorrorHound: How much of a role do horror films play in writing the songs for Doomed?

King Fowley: Horror films give me needed escapes. I love the morbid side of life and the folk in the road tales. I love seeing how death comes in so many ways, how the nerves can be turned inside and out from emotions in horror films and all that's in its grip!

HR: How did you come to decide on the image of the feature film's corpse from *Black Sabbath* for the picture disc image of the new LP?

KF: It was so morbid and odd. I loved the image. It fit the "corpse" we wanted for the record. It's old and grainy, almost washed out (the original pic on the record was taken off of TV from a dubbed VHS copy), and it still works all these years later!!

HR: What films have had the most influence on you and remain your all-time favorites to this day?

KF: The *Exorcist*, *Phantasm*, *Burnt Offerings* I love the freakish, totally catch your brain and send it going nuts! The *Exorcist* is still the scariest, *Phantasm* the funniest, and *Burnt Offerings* was the first film to "get me" in the theater as a kid!

HR: Any plans for a new album here in the near future, possibly a tour?

KF: Yes, *Surreal Overload*! Some new titles are "Skin Crawling Progress," "The Traumatic" and "Dying in Analog." It will be the first on our own label, *Shrieks from the Hellscape Records*. A tour is definite, tons of gigs in tons of new places! This is our 25th year together as a band! Up the barbarians!!

HR: Anything you want to say to the HorrorHounds and GoreHounds out there reading this?

KF: *Horror Lives!* With the bad comes the good, and vice versa! We all have our favorites! *Horror* films are very important to me, and I will always cheer for the fans of horror films!

To view Doomed's latest news and purchase merch/music go to upholombstones.net.

This past fall DC Comics unveiled a new comic book event written by Geoff Johns that introduced not one, but six new "rings" - in relation to the Green Lantern Corps (or the recent Sinestro Corps storyline) - including the intriguing new Black Ring! Controlled by The Black Hand, this new ring gives its wearers great powers. Unfortunately for the DC Universe, its power is only given to those who have passed on. That's right - dead heroes have risen and are attacking every hero in the Universe! Much more than zombies, this new comic series has taken over the industry as every title in DC's cannon has been effected - with eight special limited series launched to celebrate the event. We have taken this opportunity to showcase every cover from these eight "minis," including incentive, reprint and rare limited editions. For sanity sakes, 96-in comics have not been included (but a list of those can be found on the opposite page). Since the undead heroes and villains rose, DC Direct has been quickly producing plastic versions of zombie Superman, Martian Manhunter, Aquaman, Firestorm, Hawkman and (appropriately enough) Deadman - with many more due in stores throughout 2010! While the comic series will eventually come to a close (The Brightest Day has already been announced as the follow-up storyline), these sinister new comic creations have definitely left their mark on comic and horror enthusiasts alike. Thanks to Rockin' Rooster of Cincinnati, Ohio for their help in creating this exhaustive article!



and a limited set of promotional rings are currently available at most comic book stores as well as online.



Other titles featuring Blackest Night storylines include: Green Lantern, Green Lantern Corps, The Doom Patrol, Booster Gold, Adventure Comics, The Outsiders, R.E.B.E.L.S., Superman/Batman, The Atom, Z-Nation, Crossover: The Tower of Babel, Justice League: Emerald Coast, DC Showcase: Suicide Squad, The Flash: The Flash, DC Showcase: Black Canary and Wonder Woman Reborn.



Horrorhound 21



A Brave New World: Forsaking Your DVD Collection For a Virtual One • by Eric Newall

Have you seen the show on A&E called *HorrorFest*? The only difference between those people and your average horror fan is that the people on that show obsessively collect nasty stuff like torii or hair. Stumble into a horror fan's house and you're likely to find mountains of action figures, lobby cards, Halloween masks, T-shirts, and of course, movies... lots and lots of movies. Even the less dedicated fans usually have an unruly DVD collection likely to be threatening their marriage. We have to face the facts, we're hoarders, and most of us are just a pile of beard shavings away from an intervention.

The point being, that it takes a lot to coerce a horror fan to give up on physically collecting movies. When the idea of streaming films over the internet began to gain steam a few years ago, most scoffed at the idea that they would forsake

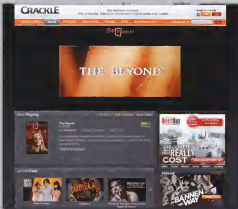
their precious movie shelves for the temporary, non-tangible world of cloud computing.

As the technology has matured, however, two things are changing people's perceptions... unmatched convenience and an ever growing selection. There are now a handful of very reliable Websites where horror fans can find feature length streaming content, many of which are endowed with a surprisingly rich selection of horror films, from the true classics to the absurdly obscure.

Not every viewing experience is the same, however, so we've taken a look at a handful of the top sites in the field, to let you know where you can make the most of your online movie watching time. The only requirement for inclusion was that you could watch films online in your Web browser without any major software, equipment, or breaking any laws that could eventually lead to you being someone's bitch in prison.

CRACKLE.COM

Crackle, formerly a start-up named "Grouper" before being bought by Sony Entertainment Group, now serves as the mega movie studio's short-form, online production house. Their main focus is original Web series, mostly coming from the minds of famous actors and comedians. Since they also have access to Sony's extensive film catalog, Crackle houses an impressive selection of feature length films, ready for streaming.



USER INTERFACE

Their design is fairly simple and easy on the eyes. That's not to say that it's necessarily easy to find the feature length horror movies, however, because their browsing features are not that impressive. You can either do a straight search for "horror" and dig through the results (most of which will be clips and Web series), or you can click "browse" and go straight to an alphabetical text based list of every film available on the site. For your sanity, I recommend going in that direction. Watching a film on their player is a cinch, although Sony has not skimped on the commercials they make you watch. For your typical feature length film, expect to see up to 10 short commercial breaks. Although none of them are really long enough to take a bathroom break or heat up a burrito, so really, what's the point?

SELECTION

Crackle has about 253 movies currently streaming, 50 of those being horror, if you include the 10 Godzilla selections that reside there. Seriously, if you're in any way a Godzilla fan, Crackle should provide you with plenty of entertainment for a boring class, travel layover, or conversation with your significant other about "where things are going." The rest of the selection is highly interesting, featuring quite a few titles you won't find anywhere else, such as Tobe Hooper's naked vampire opus *Lifeforce*, or the Seth Green starring horror-comedy *Idle Hands*. Oh, and what's that, I see there? Troll 2? You might as well just



watch it and get it over with, because it will continue to taunt you until you do.

VIDEO QUALITY

The video quality is stellar in both the smaller format and once it's expanded to full screen. It's the kind of quality that might actually keep you sticking around through all the commercials, of which there will be plenty, trust me. Seriously though, *Mohra* never looked so sexy.

CONCLUSION

Crackle really makes up for its limited horror selection by having a bunch of fantastic titles you won't find anywhere else, and just about the best video quality you'll find on a Web site that's free to use. Fans of the format shouldn't overlook their Web series either. Whether it's Jon Heide living life as a zombie in *Woke Up Dead*, or sexy Aussie stunt-woman Zoe Bell punching and kicking her way into your heart with *Angel of Death*, chances are Crackle has something that will tickle your fanboy fancy.

HULU.COM

Hulu was not the first service to offer movies and television shows streaming for free over the Internet, but it has become the most popular practically overnight, largely due to the fact that it was a joint venture between NBC and FOX. For the first time, major network shows in their first-run were being offered for free online. The only catch in the Hulu model is that the user has to watch periodic commercials which can not be skipped. Mercifully, the breaks are much shorter than traditional broadcast television breaks, sometimes lasting as little as .15 seconds. As additional movie studios have opted deals to join the site, their movie selection has continued to grow.



USER INTERFACE:

Where Hulu really shines is in presentation and user interface. To find the horror content, skip their browsing tabs (they're a little convoluted) and just search for "Horror" in the upper right-hand corner. To get to full length movies, adjust your search parameters in the dropdown boxes at the top.

Then, have at it. Once you click on a title, you're taken to a very cozy page to view your material. There you'll see a cornucopia of slickly designed option but-

tons that fade in and out effortlessly on mouse-over. My personal favorite of all these bells and whistles is the "lower lights" button, which dims all of the other content on the screen, save for the movie you're watching. This sexy mood lighting will come in handy while you sit back and take in one of their many Elvira's Movie Macabre selections. Go ahead and have some alone time, Hulu won't tell.

One additional bonus, most of Hulu's movies are embeddable, making them potential material for your blog or Web site. There's even a set of developer tools which includes an official API, that allows some larger sites such as Flixster.com to reappropriate their content for their own purposes. The upside for Hulu? Their films and shows get distributed across the 'Net with their commercials intact, increasing their potential revenue stream.

SELECTION

Admittedly, Hulu does not come close to Netflix with its overall horror selection. You'll find that the public domain staples make up a good portion of the content here. For fans of classic horror, Hulu should be your first destination. While there you can relive late night creature features of old with titles like *Black Sabbath*, *House on Haunted Hill*, *Night of the Living Dead* and *Carvenal of Souls*. They do offer other, non-public-domain titles on a regularly rotating basis as well. As of the writing of this article, you can feast your eyes on classics like *Candyman* and *Fright Night*, newer titles like *Dawn of the Dead* (07), and even some nice and grimy cult trash. In fact, if you decide to watch the infamously terrible *Troll 2*, you can test out another great use for the "lower lights" option... it helps hide the shame.

VIDEO QUALITY

When compared to Netflix, the video quality on Hulu's films is not all that impressive. However, when compared to the other free choices out there, Hulu holds its own. You'll find solid, widescreen playback at the default size and a variable "popout" option. When blown up to fullscreen there are noticeable compression artifacts, but as long as your connection is up to the job the quality remains solid.

CONCLUSION

Overall, Hulu has its downsides and the selection is nothing compared to Netflix. Still, the slick user design and interesting mix of titles makes it a really intriguing, free choice for streaming horror. They even have a new "desktop client," that allows you to browse Hulu through your favorite media player, and control the proceedings via remote control. That way you never have to get Cheeto stains on your keyboard, how thoughtful of them!

You better hurry up and enjoy it while it lasts though. As revenue continues to decline at the major television networks, rumblings about Hulu adopting some type of pay structure in 2010 are already running rampant.

NETFLIX.COM

Their simple yet revolutionary business plan has catapulted Netflix straight to the top of the online video rental food chain. Determined to expand beyond their rental-by-mail service, in 2007 the company began offering streaming video to consumers, jumping in feet first to a very young market whose profitability hadn't (and still hasn't) been proven. After initially strict pricing guidelines, the service was opened up in 2008, allowing users from all but their lowest pricing tier unlimited access to streaming video.

USER INTERFACE:

Netflix's user interface is an interesting mixture of a simple design on a powerful frame. Once you've opened your account, all you have to do to browse the horror titles available for streaming is click on "Watch



Instantly," and then mouse over the subtab to select "Horror." From there you can view everything page by page, or sort farther into sub-genres including foreign, classics, cult, slashers, etc.

Where the engine behind Netflix really shines, however, is in its networking and recommendation features. By browsing titles and rating them out of five stars, the site begins to build a profile for you as a movie fan. By doing so, it's able to give you recommendations based on the profile of users who rated each film similarly to you. It's a very well thought out system and scarily accurate. The more films you rate, the more accurate their suggestions, so as long as you give it input to work with, you'll never be without a recommendation for a rainy afternoon. Especially helpful is the "percentages" with which your views match up to other users, allowing you to weed out particular types of weirdos whose opinions you're least likely to care about. Because let's face it, the last person I would look for an opinion on *Martyrs* from is someone who owns a "Team Edward" t-shirt.

VIDEO QUALITY

Netflix's video quality is variable, meaning that it constantly shifts during viewing to adjust to a variety of factors, including your Internet connection speed and the overall performance of your computer. When a major adjustment is needed, it will occasionally pause the film and display dialogue letting you know that your connection has slowed. Overall quality, if your system can handle it, is very impressive. Some older films, especially the cult horror selections, have some really terrible transfers which can hamper

the experience. Then again, horror fans have been dealing with that for years. Out of all the sites we've looked at, Netflix has the best quality when stretched to full screen.

SELECTION

Selection is another area where Netflix takes the cake. At the time of this writing, there are currently 317 horror titles, from all subgenres, available to watch instantly. With each new week of DVD releases, Netflix is adding more and more



titles to the mix. And for those more masochistic HorrorHounds out there, there is a glut of "B" and out pictures so lowly rated that they're practically daring you to watch. What's that, did you say "golf-themed slasher"? Why, don't mind if I do!



CONCLUSION:

There are lots of interesting choices on this list, but if you come away with one conclusion from this article it should be this: NETFLIX NETFLIX NETFLIX. Sure they charge, but considering how cheap unlimited access is, it's worth it for their unmatched selection. Plus, you get DVDs through the mail, so there's virtually no cinematic masterpiece (or trashierpiece) that won't be at your beckon call 24/7. Added bonus, *Deadly* fans can watch new episodes of the series immediately after they run. Take that, Showtime!

FearNET.com

FearNET - a joint venture between Comcast, Lionsgate and Sony - is a dual on-demand cable channel and online destination for horror. Currently their titles are only available on Comcast cable systems, but anyone with an Internet connection can log on and check out a bevy of interesting genre choices. As an added perk, they also develop their own web series.

USER INTERFACE

There's a bit of a give-and-take with FearNET's user interface. On the one hand, out of all of the other choices we examine in this article, FearNET is the only one with a truly "horror" atmosphere. It's a given, considering it's the only site on the list that is 100% genre-centric, but it's something that can not be overlooked. As horror fans, we crave atmosphere in our films, and so a little hospitality while we're viewing our online video content can go a long way.

However, the fact that FearNET contains all of the accoutrements of your typical online horror site it's also one of its design flaws. Assaulting



THE VERDICT:

We know that the vast majority of rocksteady horror fanatics are not going to forsake their tangible movie collections for virtual ones, at least not any time soon, but that doesn't mean that you should ignore these streaming sites. Think of them as virtual extensions of your current library, adding an always expanding gaggle of classic, new, and obscure horror titles to your already overgrown stockpile.

So we've finally coaxed you to step dressing your DVD shelves for a few moments and venture into the online horror world. Don't worry, they'll still be there when you get back, we promise. Our final recommendation?

Instead of picking one of these sites and becoming a die-hard user who never ventures out to see life on the other side, we recommend you use all four of them (and any others out there) in unison to have a truly complete online horror catalog. Do this, and you'll practically never have to go outside or interact with another human being again. Besides, who needs social interaction when you've got naked vampires, crazed Nihilog residents and racist dragon gods to fill your days?

Maybe we're kidding about that... but we're not about Troll 2. Seriously, please don't speak to us again until you've seen it. Well, go already! 🍷

one's eyes is the norm at the majority of horror sites, especially the most popular, and FearNET has adapted this style with an alarming fervor. Once your browser finally loads the flash heavy site and half-page long rotating banner, they immediately hit you with an autoplaying video promo regardless of whether or not you actually hit play. Once you finally make it to their generic YouTube-type player, you simply have to watch a promo for one of their original Web series, and then view your movie mostly unfettered, with the occasional FearNET promotion interrupting the proceedings.

SELECTION

FearNET sports a fairly paltry overall selection of films, totaling around 20 at any given time. However, since they are a joint venture of two major horror studios (along with Comcast), you won't find any public-domain filler here. During this past holiday season, they had a bunch of holiday-themed horror on display (which they called "Happy HorrorDays"), including the classic *Christmas Evil*, its slightly less entertaining cousin *New Year's Evil*, and a film sure to become a holiday horror classic, *Santa's Slay* (trust me, at least watch the first scene... it's worth it to see Fran Drescher's head set on fire and James Caan contemplating firing his agent). A new, free streaming movie debuts every Wednesday, and titles rotate in and out of availability.

VIDEO QUALITY

They've downgraded from the premium player that they originally launched with in 2007, to the aforementioned stopped-down version. The video quality at this small site is passable. There is the option to blow it up to fullscreen, but the results are less



than desirable, with jerky motion and compression artifacts making it almost unwatchable. For what it is, it works, but don't expect the same quality that you get with Netflix or even Hulu.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, FearNET seems to have been built as more of an online extension of their on-demand channel as opposed to the other way around. As such, it's silly to expect quite the experience that you get with the larger sites. However, when you're browsing around for full length horror to watch, FearNET can occasionally save the day with a high quality title you probably won't find streaming anywhere else online. And for those interested in the bells and whistles, you have lots of horror blog content, clips, trailers, and their proprietary Web series (ex: *30 Days of Night*) to sink your teeth into. Just bring sunglasses, you'll need it to avoid being blinded by the layout.



PROPHETS OF DOOM

As coined in the original *Friday the 13th*, "the prophet of doom" became a slasher-staple with his ominous warnings to teenagers who dare travel beyond the reach of safely Stealing lines such as "You're all doomed!" or "You're all gonna die!" - these fortune tellers, if you will, spell out the end for a young cast of would-be-victims. Here are the best forewarners from a bevy of titles, many of which are covered throughout this very article! Be warned!



NIGHTMARE AMERICAN NIGHTMARE

In 1981, the full swing of slasher films in the U.S. was upon us, and as we had fallen in the steps of the Italians by producing our own interpretations of giallo, Canadian filmmaker Don McBrearty took his crack at the American phenomena with his own Italian flare. *American Nightmare* is about a man named Eric who is searching for his missing sister (played by Alexandra Paul, *Baywatch*), who unbeknownst to Eric has been working as a prostitute. As you see in the first five minutes, Eric's search will prove fruitless. However, the hunt continues and Eric finds that his sister has been reported missing courtesy of Sergeant Sklar, who is expertly played by cult favorite Michael Ironside (*Scanners*). This encounter leads Eric to discover his sister's career choice and that the search for her was doomed pointless by the local police. Eric then goes renegade to find his sister, and after finding few clues and leads, he partners up with Louise, his sister's roommate. Louise leads Eric to a local strip joint (where they encounter several scantily clad women, one of which is Lenore Zann who you may recognize from films such as *Happy Birthday to Me* and *Visiting Hours*). While their foot search hits some hurdles, our killer, sporting a beret on his head and surgical gloves on his hands, is busy disposing of hockers. Overall the film is a joy to watch as the director makes you sympathize with the characters while still making a slasher that's intense with some jumps to spare. Sadly, this film has still yet to make it onto DVD, nor is it expected to anytime soon. So go ahead and hold onto your Media Home Entertainment VHS release of *American Nightmare*! - Matt Moore

BLOOD CULT

During the emergence of the home video market, distributors would buy the video rights to movies from the big studios and release them on VHS and BETA. Of course, it didn't take long for the studios to realize that they could just skip the middle man (aka the distributor) and release the movies themselves. The independent video distributors then, feeling business loss, found that instead of spending their cash (around \$300,000) to purchase the rights to a film (remember, this was in the early '80s), they could just make their own movie for under \$100,000, and distribute it themselves. Hence, the straight-to-video market was born.

The first movie made this way was the 1985 movie *Blood Cult*; it was a slasher film about a small college town that's being plagued by a series of brutal slayings of some young co-eds. After the grisly deed, the murderer takes a body part and lays it a strange dog-headed coin behind. *Blood Cult* is not a great movie by any means, it's your basic stalk-and-slash movie. It seems they tried to come up with an interesting story, but didn't think it through enough. But I assume they weren't setting out to break any new grounds other than the shot-on-video thing. They wanted to make a quick and cheap, and also effective horror film, and for that, I think they succeeded. This set the trend for what would become, with an array of independent "SOV" (shot-on-video) productions popping up throughout the '80s.

Blood Cult was directed by Christopher Lewis, who also went on to direct the pseudo-sequel to *Blood Cult*, entitled *Revenge*, which starred John Camaridine and Patrick Wayne. Although, Lewis' most famous film was *The Ripper*, starring Tom Savini.

One promotional item from *Blood Cult* exhibits just how much times have changed since the '80s. It was a real box-cutting knife with the phrase: "The cutting edge of horror" under the movie logo on the side. How cool is that? We'll never see anything like that again! - Jon Katay

BLOOD CULT

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CHRISTMAS SLASHERS

In 1978, John Carpenter's *Halloween* gave birth to a cinematic wave that countless other filmmakers would continue to ride throughout the 1980s – the holiday-themed slasher film. *Imitators* followed in force, and before you knew it, the market was flooded with holiday slasher fare. It seemed as if every holiday, no matter how minuscule, was cursed with some masked killer prowling around in the dark and patently waiting to add another victim to their body count. Some of these films even dared to tackle the holiday that was already celebrated (at least commercially) around a man in a big red plush suit, breaking into homes and stalking people – Christmas. Riding on the coattails of the financial success of *Halloween* and the groundwork laid by Bob Clark's 1974 holiday horror, *Black Christmas*, the decade of the '80s saw the greatest output of Christmas killers. The first, and arguably the best, arrived in 1980 with Lewis Jackson's *Christmas Evil*. Also known as *You Better Watch Out*, the story tells the tale of Harry, a middle-aged manager at a toy factory who was scarred during his own childhood after seeing Santa Claus do the dirty with his mother – unknown that Santa was actually his daddy dressed up as Father Christmas, and as an adult, Harry has developed an unhealthy obsession with Christmas, spying on the neighborhood kids and keeping naughty and nice books to detail the exploits of each particular child. Desperated by his co-workers and younger brother, Harry's only escape is to indulge his psyche in holiday spirit. Soon enough, Harry begins to think he is the fat, jolly old elf known as Santa, adorning the red suit, gluing on a white beard, and delivering toys to those children who were on his nice list and dirt to those he decided were naughty. Sure enough, the adults who taunted or took advantage of Harry are given something nobody could ever imagine receiving from Santa Claus. *Christmas Evil* stands out for taking itself very seriously – it may not be the bloodiest Christmas slasher – in fact, some may argue that it isn't even a slasher due to its low body count and in-depth plot, but it does an exceptional job at developing a sympathetic villain (Harry) as well as a compelling storyline, even throwing in a metaphorical ending that is still discussed and debated to this day. The film is available on DVD in a special edition director's cut that is a must-have for any fan of Christmas horror.

One of the least celebrated entries into the subgenre of holiday slashers is 1984's *Don't Open Till Christmas*. Rather than featuring a killer Santa, this flick follows a killer in London whose victims are always dressed up as Santa Claus. The film has a fair body count and enough carnage to boot, but ultimately only the most diehard fans of Christmas horror will really take to this picture. Production issues were plentiful during the shooting of *Don't Open Till Christmas* with at least three different directors taking the reigns at various points and tons of footage scrapped. Unfortunately, these production issues are evident in the lackluster final product. The unauthorized DVDs (Substance, Synergy) are currently out-of-print in the US, but are still available in the UK for

those with region-free capabilities on their DVD players.

Probably the most well-known Christmas slasher of the '80s, due in no small part to its iconic poster art of Santa's arm protruding from a chimney with an axe in hand on a snow covered roof, *Silent Night, Deadly Night* was also released during the holiday season in 1984. The film is about an adult male named Billy who witnessed his parents being brutally murdered by a man dressed as Santa during childhood. After turning 18, one of the nuns from the Catholic orphanage Billy was raised at gets him a job in the stockroom of a toy store. Things are going fine until the holidays roll around and Billy is asked to fill-in playing Santa Claus for the store customers – he finally snaps on Christmas Eve and embarks on a creative killing spree – including the famous Umeka Quigley antler impalement – that eventually brings him full circle to the orphanage he was raised in. *Silent Night, Deadly Night* is a solid slasher that has become a cult classic over the years, but the reception was anything but warm upon its initial release – critics condemned it, organizations protested it, and it was eventually pulled from theaters (although it was later rereleased by a different distributor). The film ultimately achieved enough success to spawn four sequels, two of which saw the light of day in the 1990s, *Silent Night, Deadly Night 2* was released in 1987 and is most noteworthy for its extensive



use of stock footage from the original film shown in flashback scenes in order to beef up the picture's runtime. The sequel follows Billy's younger brother Ricky as he follows in his brother's maniacal footsteps. The character of Ricky was also the focus of 1989's *Silent Night, Deadly Night III: Better Watch Out!* For the third entry, genre icon Bill Moseley portrays Ricky in what is easily the most absurd Christmas slasher of the '80s, with Ricky hunting down a blind, clairvoyant girl after asking from a coma – all the while having a bizarre dream affixed to his head by a doctor. To explain the plot of this one would take a master's degree, so check it out for yourself if you dare – the film was just recently released onto DVD for the first time as part of the *Silent Night, Deadly Night* box set which features Parts 3 thru 5 of the franchise. Parts 1 and 2 were released years ago as a double feature by Anchor Bay, but the disc is sadly out-of-print and goes for a pretty penny on eBay. A rerelease of Part 1 was issued by the Bay a couple years back, but that too is now OOP.

One of the most memorable Christmas slashers though happens to have been a remake of a '70s movie (starring Joan Collins), which in itself was based on a comic book from the 1950s – *Tales from the Crypt's* "And All Through the House." The anthology tale, which aired on HBO in 1989 featured a crazed killer on the loose (Larry Drake, dressed as Santa) terrorizing a woman who had just killed her husband. Absolutely terrifying, the episode had the benefit of using two past interpretations of the story to build upon. The Christmas slasher has become a tradition and continues to this day with the more recent holiday films, such as *Jack Frost*, *Santa Claus and Santa's Slay*, however, the '80s slashers reign as the superior Santas. – Kenneth Nelson





DOOM ASYLUM

Hands down the funniest slasher film of the era, a laugh riot from the director of *Friday the 13th: The Series*, *Doom Asylum* is a low budget picture filled with horrible acting, stereotypical characters, a silly disfigured killer, great gore and nearly every other convention needed to fill the ultimate '80s slasher time capsule. The film follows a group of teens who visit an old asylum where they are besieged by Tina and the Tots, a group of punk rock Madonna wannabes, B-movie queen Ruth Collins (*Cemetery High*) who plays Tina, shows off her cans and kicks ass while Patty Mullen (*Frankenhooker* star and *Penthouse Magazine* Pet of the Month August 1986) plays Kiki LaRue, acts really dumb and does not? The killer: a demented coroner, watches reruns of old '30s black and white Tod Slaughter films while plotting his next victim's demise via autopsy equipment. The movie also stars *Sex and the City*'s Kristin Davis in her film debut. Filled with '80s jokes, concerning then president Ronald Reagan and quotes like, "You're in a lot of trouble torpedo tits," the film begs to be seen under the influence of lots of beer and in a party setting. Made on a budget next to nothing, the film demonstrates that slashers do not have to be serious to be entertaining. Available on DVD, and totally uncrit for the first time ever thanks to Code Red, it can be picked up for just \$7.44 from DeepDiscount.com, a price that even includes shipping! If you really want to make a splash at your next party or on Friday movie night order today, you will not regret it, I promise. - Aaron Crowell



EDGE OF THE AXE

What appears to be simply another standard Halloween Michael Myers rip-off proves to be another overlooked title currently collecting dust on video store shelves (and not yet available on DVD). An American/Spanish joint production directed by José Ramón Larraz (*Rest in Pieces* and *Vampires*), *Edge of the Axe* delivers a cohesive plot and a bevy of nasty axe inflected on-screen kills. A killer in a vacant white mask 'and black hooded raincoat is viciously murdering the women in the small town of Patterson. Offering up the typical whodunit story line filled with red herrings and possible suspects, the ending still comes as a bit of a shocker. The film stars notables: Page Mosely (*Girls Nite Out*), Patty Shepard (*Hannah, Queen of the Vampires*), Alicia Moro (*Slugs*), and the Spanish horror legend Jack Taylor, who has appeared in *Pieces*, *Autopsy: Horror of the Zombies* and *The Icebox Murders*, just to name a few. Recommended for fans of Juan Piquer Simón's gory slasher, *Pieces* and Italian giallo alike. - Aaron Crowell



FADE TO BLACK

Before *Scream* showed the world not to piss off movie geeks, there was *Fade to Black*. Released in 1980, it starred Dennis Christopher as Eric Birford, a young lonely man who lives with his aunt in Hollywood, and finds solace and escape in films. He's a walking encyclopedia of movies and works as a low level employee in the industry. When Eric's pushed too far by reality, he winds up spiraling down into murder and insanity. He's unique in that when he kills his victims he does so as his favorite movie characters, such as *Dracula*, *Hop Along Cassidy* and the Mummy.

The movie inserts scenes from the films it references which adds a nice touch and a peek into Eric's psyche as he comes out his plans. Christopher's ability to morph into these other personas really makes the film. Genre fave Tim Thomerson co-stars as the psychologist trying to save Eric from himself. Also of note is that this is one of the first feature films to star actor Mickey Rourke.

- Jessica Dayez

Girls Nite Out

A lot can be gleaned from the keywords on IMDb.com when you search for a particular film. In the case of 1984's *Girls Nite Out*, this is especially true. "College," "Bear Costume," "Slasher Flick" - that just about sums up everything you'll need to know when deciding whether or not this film is for you. If that wasn't enough, know that critically acclaimed actor and genre vet Hal Holbrook (*The Fog*, *Creepshow* and *Rubels*) also has a main role here, no doubt paying off a long overdue gambling debt. Hilariously cast with "college kids" who look about ready to start collecting on their 401Ks, *Girls Nite Out* is a low budget '80s slasher with just enough camp appeal to get you to the finish line. It's bound to become your second favorite film featuring a bear suit, bested only by Nic Cage's remake of *The Wickeman*. - Eric Newell



HIGH SCHOOL SLASHERS

Most slashers can be linked back to John Carpenter's *Halloween*. This classic film established a number of plot points that were forever branded as slasher mainstays - one of which was the teenage victim. Current entry to the most trendy of rejuvenations this subgenre has received (i.e., the teen slasher of the '90s), the idea of students being stalked in the most dreaded location imaginable - school - only amped up the effect these scare films had on their target audiences. Whether the films feature the high school student or their surroundings, there is no shortage of these often-bloody horror films.

One of the first high school slashers of the '80s came in 1981 with *Student Bodies*. Long before the film-type was oversaturated, this spoof comedy actually homaged all the common traits of a school-slasher, from the cache of suspects to the point-of-view killer with the obnoxious breathing and the jokey inventive kills ... mostly knocking *Halloween* and *Friday the 13th*. This is not an amazing film by any means, but considering the year it came out, it was definitely ahead of its time.

Prom Night, starring Jamie Lee Curtis, was released in 1981. This film followed the now-standard tale of school kids who accidentally kill someone and cover it up, only to find themselves stalked years later by the ghost of the deceased, or a loved one who saw it all happen and is seeking revenge years later (see *Quintessential Slashers*). Jamie also starred in *Terror Train* that same year. Although the film technically revolves around college students, it is worth mentioning for its similarities to many of the films on this list and the before-mentioned theme.

Graduation Day (1981) follows a high school track team after their star runner, Laura, dies from a heart attack in the middle of a race. Her friends are distraught, her sister (home for the funeral) is anxious to find out what happened, and all the while, the rest of the track team are being murdered one by one. Slow, but effective, this film's ending is a great example of a classic '80s horror finale ... the moment when the supposedly dead killer comes back-to-life, for one last scare!

Not quite a slasher, and not quite a high school film - *Evilspeak*, still meshes with this company. Clint Howard's 1991 standout title takes place at a military school, where Clint's character, Stanley Coopersmith, is picked on daily. Finding a book of black mass, he soon evokes evil spirits. When each of his harassing classmates are killed (leading to an impressive body count) the film reaches a *Carnie*-invoking moment as Clint becomes possessed and the film climaxes to epic proportions.

Redefine your definition of a slasher for this one, and buy this title today!

In 1986 George Duggdale and Mark Ezra released (in this writer's opinion) the best of the bunch with *Slaughter High*. Although the film takes place at a high school, the majority of the plot unfolds years after graduation. The film follows Marty Rantzen (Simon Scuddamore) as a student who is targeted by a rather large clique of bullies (including Caroline Munro, a then-37-year-old playing a high schooler). After a prank-gone-wrong, Marty is left badly injured and psychologically disturbed. He disappears - only to return and seek out revenge on the 10th anniversary of his class' graduation. Tricked back to the school, these fools are picked off one by one in an over-the-top display of inventive kills. A slasher through and through!

In *Return to Horror High* (1987), another nontraditional school fright feature, a killer is on the loose in a high school during a film shoot about a series of murders that afflicted the very school they are filming in just years prior. Horribly acted and woefully edited, the film teetered between not only the making-of the film, but the murderous aftermath surrounding the police investigation, with the director "making" the audience into thinking filmed scenes are real and vice versa. The film boasts plenty of T&A, take one and notable cameos (including Maureen McCormick (Marisa Brady) and George Clooney). Most of the deaths are off-screen and include a severed head, stabbing, and death by kitty litter (that's the best we could make of it). The problem is, you never know if you are watching the real movie, the-filming (of confusing flashbacks) by the actor/crew, or even a dream sequence ... the movie seems to want to confuse the audience more than anything, and it worked!

Cheerleader Camp (1988) threatens with high school cheerleaders - if those high schoolers were 25 to 30-year-olds. As with any goofy horror film, this one is padded with notable names - including Betsy Russell (the *Saw* franchise), as the lead (Alison), and Lell Garrett (1970s *Tiger Beat* cover-boy). These "teens" are located at a cheap-looking cheer camp, instead of a school setting, and the plot goes kill-to-kill until nearly all competitors are "eliminated." Has Alison gone competition-crazy or is someone else in the camp killing to become top cheer champ?

Brad Pitt makes a rare early horror appearance as a student whose classmates are being murdered by a mysterious slasher in 1989's *Cutting Class*. Jill Schoelen appears as the lead girl, whom the story revolves around. One of the most interesting aspects of the film is a killer trampoline sequence that predates a similar shock-moment heralded by fans of Eli Roth's *Thanksgiving* trailer (*Grindhouse*). - Nathan Himmelfarb

iNITIATION

They pledge themselves to be young, stay young... and die young.

This 1984 lost gem is a rarely spoken about film of the era, but truly encompassed every aspect of a classic slasher. The story starts with sorority sister Kelly Fairchild (played by Daphne Zuniga who had previously appeared in *The Corn That Dropped Blood* (AKA *Pranks*) and later on became a certain princess in a little film called *Spaceballs*) and her bad dreams and recurring nightmares about the past. Her protective parents have made it their mission to cloud her mind with nonsense rather than tell her the truth. In college now, Kelly rushes a sorority and in participating in the usual hazing-type activities. Meanwhile, she begins to work with a psych grad student who helps Kelly understand

those dreams she has been having. As the movie develops, her parents attempt to stop any progress these sessions may have had, but it's too late for the sisters who go into Kelly's "daddy" (played by Clu Guegler) department store to complete one of their sorority-ush tasks, and one by one are taken out in gory-fashion by a killer in the building. The ending has an okay twist that has been seen quite a few times, but the overall reveal is pretty screwed up from a conventional family stance. This film, although not too easy to find on shelves today, was released to DVD in the late '90s courtesy of Anchor Bay and was rereleased in the early 2000s as a double-bill DVD with *Mountain Top Motel Massacre*. - Matt Moore

JUST BEFORE DAWN

A camper full of lively adults ascends deep into the mountains for a wilderness getaway. While driving, they encounter a man named Ty (Mike Kellin) who earlier witnessed his friend being killed by a large man. Ty begs them to abandon their trip and take him back down the mountain to save, not only his life, but their own.

As in any slasher film, they ignore his dire warnings and proceed up the mountain anyway. As they go about their days, they keep seeing this young girl in the forest who is watching them, but as they attempt to approach her, she always runs off. One night while dancing around their campfire, the young girl shows up with her parents who warn them to keep it down or they'll "raise the devil."

After ignoring all of the local's warning, the next day it begins to catch up to them as things go horribly wrong and a "demon," which is really a pair of

inbred mountain men, begin to pick them off, one by one.

Jeff Lieberman takes a premise that has been done before (*Deliverance*, *Friday the 13th*, *Rituals*) and successfully makes it his own story. Although the camping, slasherbackwood, psycho schtick had been done by the time Lieberman made this film, his style, feel and characters make *Just Before Dawn* a unique addition to the popular subgenre. One of the things that first stood out to me was that the campers in this film were not debauched drunks who make stupid decisions (despite not heeding multiple warnings) but are rather level headed, real and devoid of the usual slasher clichés. A nice change of pace!

If your looking for a diamond in the rough, a lost gem that you might not have seen yet and you like slasher and/or old grindhouse classics, then give *Just Before Dawn* a try. From the rugged, grainy frames of nature to the emblematic death splashed across the screen, fans of the old horror cinema are in for a treat with this Lieberman classic! — Jason Schreierberger



SLASHER PARTY

MGM offers up a schizo campus cut-up during the zenith of the '80s slasher boom. The story opens with not one but two pull backs ... you know, those scenes meant to trick and fool the viewer into thinking what's on-screen is truly happening in the film, only (haha) it ends up being a movie or a dream sequence within the film (a gimmick employed in *He Knows Your Name*, *Anguish* and *An American Werewolf in London*). We eventually meet three female sorority pledges (Phoebe, Vivie and Jennifer) who must undergo the rigors of their initiation to Sigma Alpha Pi. They are also planning a big April Fool's Halloween costume party (?) at the once condemned frat house on campus. College hinks are in full swing as we are rewarded with a frat prank involving a hot tub and bees that leads to a little T&A action! The tomfoolery continues well into the party which includes a faux guillotine beheading, staged frat boys fighting and faked paranormal activity all taking place in the off-limits frat (the house being closed as a result of the accidental death of a pledge 20 years prior). Shifty characters such as Professor Zito (played by '80s staple Paul Bartel, *Chopping Mall*) and the itchy-footed Martin (Ralph Seymour; *Just Before Dawn*) give rise to the whodunit element found in virtually every '80s slasher. After an hour in and only one kill, we finally reach the moment we have been waiting for as the mysterious killer appears onscreen, wearing (of all things) a big, bulky, old fashion, deep sea, diving suit. Yep ... this film is very tongue-in-cheek to say the least. His array of weapons includes a barbed trident, a machete and a hammer which he uses to "off" the party goers (salty, with all the kills occurring off-screen). Not all is lost as we are rewarded with a fringe full of body parts, and an odd turn in the story as Jennifer (Joanna Johnson) suddenly becomes possessed by the revenge-seeking spirit of Allen, the deceased pledge who died in the house decades earlier. The movie then descends into *Evil Dead*-meets-*Night of the Demons* territory when the possessed Jennifer chases her friends through the house, crawling up walls, hanging from chandeliers and drooling with her elongated tongue exposed. A very fun melding of comedy and horror and possibly the oddest slasher of the decade - and in this issue. — Aaron Crowell

LAST HORROR FILM

In 1982 we were overwhelmed in the horror film world with a slew of slashers. Some of them made the grade as classics to come while others slept away with very little recognition thanks to the heavyweights of the year, mainly *Friday the 13th: Part 2*. One film that failed to catch on was David Winters' *Last Horror Film*. Making its debut in 1982, the film starred Joe Spinell and Caroline Munro, both of whom worked together in the William Lustig classic *Maniac*. Caroline stars as actress and ultra fan-gone-haywire, scream queen Jana Bates, whose cab driver-aspiring filmmaker Vinny Durand (Spinell) has a particular obsession with. This obsession leads Durand to take to the streets to make his film and to use Bates in his film in what ever means necessary. Durand slays his way all the way through the Cannes Film Festival in hopes of eliminating Jana's Hollywood friends, taking his film role, or joining her friends. This film, although was seen as a sleeper in many regards to the slasher community, still holds to its guns

in its interesting kills and overall feel. Durand has an amusing disgust with gore, when watching a horror film he is almost brought to his knees to puke when blood and death is shown onscreen, a big difference from Spinell's gore soaked film *Maniac*. Some people think that this horror film was Joe Spinell's last, however, it was not, as he went on to direct 1988's *The Undertaker*. But with this film, as many others Joe did, he gave it his all and it showed from the first second to the last. A few interesting facts about the film include Durand's mother actually being played by Spinell's mother, and if you also look around when Durand gets to Cannes you will see poster art for Ruggero Deodato's classic *Cannibal Holocaust* in 2009, thanks to Troma Team Video, *The Last Horror Film* finally got its anticipated uncult release to DVD. This disc was chock with interviews and trailers as well as the short *Mr. Robbie AKA: Maniac 2*. Definitely worth the pick up! — Matt Moore



When looking back on the last 10 issues highlighting some of the excellent companies that partook in the VHS Boom of the 1980s, very few distributors reach true "icon" status in the minds of collectors and fans alike. Many of us have felt the excitement of renting a tape, anxious to get it home and then feeling the suspense build as the company logo splashed across the screen. Media Home Entertainment definitely delivered that feeling, and with their amazingly large catalog, they had something for everyone. When their logo crashed down like a 20-ton brick, you knew the next hour and a half was going to be filled with enjoyment. Media did release its share of rotten tomatoes, but for the most part, their catalog was solid. Media was a true icon of the video era and still stands strong in the hearts of fans to this day.

HISTORY

The biggest question that popped up when sitting down to write this article was, "Where do I start?" There are endless possibilities, as Media tapped into every single genre from cartoons to skin flicks to horror and sci-fi. There was no territory they did not explore, and in doing so, Media assembled one of the most essential and diverse film catalogs of the VHS Boom. Their catalog was an incredible resource to new stores looking to get a handful of titles to kickstart their film rental enterprise.

Media came into existence in 1978 as one of the first companies to release VHS tapes to rental chains. However, Media was not always called Media. Back at its inception, co-owner Charles Band and his business partners were thinking of a title, whereupon Charlie threw out his then-wife's name, "Media." That, as they say, was that — Media Home Entertainment was born. Their first ventures into the VHS market included releases of some true horror classics, including such titles as *Halloween*, *Night of the Living Dead* and *Tourist Trap*. This market incursion had store owners taking notice rather quickly, and Media grew even faster than anticipated.

Around 1982, Band decided to pursue his own endeavors, selling his shares in the company (a move that led to the Big Box giant, Wizard Video!) to his partners. Since Media had originally been named after Band's wife, the remaining owners decided to change their name to the powerhouse we all know and love today:

Media Home Entertainment. Continuing their aggressive style, the owners acquired additional product in order to keep up with the growing demand. They also adopted a new logo and created a new marketing campaign, which produced a full onslaught of promotions (see below). In doing so, Media grew to levels previously unobtainable by any other distributor, firmly establishing itself as one of the true leaders of the industry.

Media's catalog was vast and diverse, and hit every genre of film, even releasing stand-up comedy shows, concerts and how-to videos. But what we HorrorHounds care about is ... the horror! And horror they had! Within their catalog lived Freddy Krueger, Leatherface and Michael Myers, as well as films from Troma and underground cult fave Andy Milligan. Media expanded their horror catalog by the truckload, for which we are eternally thankful. Many horror fans encountered so many timeless classics and cheese tests for the first time thanks to Media.

One aspect of VHS that fans appreciate most is the beloved box art. However, very rarely did Media step away from the original theatrical poster, and in some instances, they would actually abbreviate the image laid on the one-sheet for their VHS box. This tactic in no way cheapened the movie or its original theatrical advertising campaign, but instead was used more as a marketing approach to emphasize the "point of interest" by plastering it on the cover: show the gore, show the killer, grab the prospective renter and move on.

Regarding instances of editorial cuts and time made for the home video market (a habit widely



Fun Fact: Much like *Halloween* and *The Wicker Man*, Media rereleased many of their first-run movies with either the Media text, Media text or the updated cover featuring the Media logo.



observed throughout the '80s), Media stayed away from that practice as much as possible. The film *The Dawn That Dripped Blood* was one prime example. The theatrical cut fans saw on the big screen had several moments where you could tell something had been snipped, but when Media released it on VHS, the missing elements were proudly presented in all their glory. This move led to a more widespread interest in the video market, especially with Media titles. *Maniac* is another prime example of the differences seen on the big screen vs. the small screen in terms of gore.

company whose trail ultimately found a dead end.

Despite the explosion of DVD, we have yet to see many of Media's titles on this new digital format (like many other VHS labels). From *American Nightmare* to *Terror on Tour*, a lot of Media releases are still waiting in the dark, longing for a digital upgrade. However, in time I'm pretty sure most of these gems will come out on our new favorite format, Blu-ray. (After all, we all thought *Four Flies on Grey Velvet* would never happen, right?)

THE SLASHERS OF MEDIA

In the '80s, we saw an influx of slasher films being released. In fact,



Aside from the occasional run-time cuts, Media always continued to represent the supreme product in terms of quality.

Most of Media's releases also had larger distribution numbers, which made it easier to find their titles. At one point in the late '80s and into the early '90s, Media partnered up with Columbia House to offer collectors the opportunity to order three movies for a mere \$9.99 (plus shipping), which shows just how easy it was to obtain their titles. Video store clerks were even treated to "truckload sales" from time to time, where warehouses that supplied local chains would open their doors to clerks and owners, inviting them to purchase multiple titles from the Media catalog at severe discounts in order to move inventory and keep their product alive and on the shelves.

Throughout the early '90s, Media held their ground with release after release. But mid-decade, issues arose causing Media to stop releasing films altogether. Most of their titles started to see release via Video Treasures and Starmaker, and eventually the Media name disappeared completely. Unlike other companies who went under with massive swan dives, Media more or less followed the course of an expanding



week after week new body count films appeared on the big screen – some that were worth the theater admission ticket price and some that fans waited to see until after they hit the shelves in the local mom and pops. Although some slashers had gone content on the big screen than in the home video format, Media was not one of those cutters! A lot of films containing juicy bits that had eluded the cutting room floor en route to the big screen were presented in the same theatrical manner on videocassette. Media was by far the largest distributor of slasher films, with movies like *Fade to Black*, *Hell Night* and the bloodless slasher *Don't Go in the House at the Helm*, as well as the *A Nightmare on Elm Street* series. When it came to some of our favorite slasher films, it was a no-brainer as to what label to look for at the rental store.

COLLECTABILITY

With Media's catalog, there are so many titles to choose from with so many different levels of rarity, it's akin to collecting baseball cards of the entire MLB. For many genre aficionados, Media and Vestron normal-





ly represent one's first ventures into the VHS collecting market. While some titles are easy to find, others have proven to be a rather difficult challenge, with the releases from the original incarnation of Media (Media) still ranking as the most collectable and valuable of the company's output. One in particular is *Nocturna: Granddaughter of Dracula* (1979). This film, although fairly overlooked in the horror world, gained huge popularity in the realm of col-

lecting due mainly to the fact it was solely released under the "Media" label while most other titles were re-released under the Media mantle. This makes *Nocturna* less common to find, and therefore more valuable in the eyes of collectors.

Although the older Media releases constitute much of the collectability cachet in the Media catalog, another flick released on the Media label that currently demands good bread is the 1976 oddball horror schlock film, *Albino*. This title is one that pops up from time to time for sale, and is a good one to grab if you can find it cheap.

However, "cheap" for *Albino* over the past five years has been



around the \$60-\$80 mark. Most of the Media releases that end up being a slightly more collectable than others seem to huddle around \$50, whereas more common releases can normally be acquired at a very reasonable price, around a couple bucks.

With most Media titles being relatively affordable, venturing into the world of VHS collecting is pretty easy and rewarding. Being able to score a few killer titles without breaking the bank is always a nice feat to accomplish, but with more and more of the surviving ma and pa shops purging the good of VHS and the ever-growing popularity of VHS collecting showing no sign of slowing, even those cheap "starter" VHS tapes will soon turn into coveted collectables. Much like a baseball card increases in value when the player dies, VHS collectors are currently watching the medium itself die. But don't rush out and buy everything at once—the best tactic is to grab a few here and there as occasions present themselves, thereby keeping your collection growing while keeping your wallet from going dry.

They're coming back to give you a buzz.

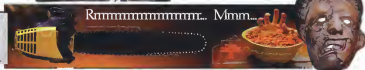
Buy this book now! It's the only book that tells you everything you need to know about the world of VHS collecting. It's the only book that tells you everything you need to know about the world of VHS collecting. It's the only book that tells you everything you need to know about the world of VHS collecting.



They won't cost you an arm and a leg.



Order this now!



Fun Fact: *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932) has been copied in such films as *The Naked Prey* (1966), *Escape 2000* (1982), *Hard Target* (1993), *Surviving the Game* (1994) and *The Condemned* (2007).







PROMOTIONS

As we have seen in previous Video Invasion entries, promotions are a large part of what made the video era so special to a lot of us (outside of the artwork on the box). Media was by far one of the most prominent in the territory of promotions. In addition to their ads in trade publications and standard magazines, Media also dominated the market with a variety of standees, posters, t-shirts and other unusual treats. Some of the more unique promotional elements were those used for *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.

To push this film included a 6-foot tall standee of Leatherface, as well as a box filled with goodies ranging from a video screener of "TCM2," a rare poster of a chainsaw and a hand in a bowl, and a batch of Bubba and Co.'s Chili Mix Nowadays, these items are more often seen as separate pieces, but if found together as a complete set will go for a pretty penny on the collector market. Like many promotions, most of the goodie boxes were trashed, resulting in the increased value of this rare kit. Even the original "TCM," when it made its Media debut, was accompanied by a cool little key-chain (now quite the hard item to find).

Outside of the Sawyer bunch, horror classics such as the *A Nightmare on Elm Street* series were launched with a barrage of promotional material ranging from standees and posters to a Quartz watch used in the promotion of "Nightmare 4" for select video stores. Sometimes the free stuff was all it took for a store to grab a few extra copies for its rental catalog, and Media was always there to smooth the transition from prospective buyer to satisfied owner. One thing Media did with these giveaways was to utilize the marketing of everyday but necessary goods to video shops, such as pens, highlighters and notepads. For example, with the release of Troma's *Class of Nuke 'Em High*, Media included a pink or yellow highlighter, poking fun at the standard high school supply that it was. But this move also helped to get the film's name out there even more. Sometimes all it took for video clerks to recommend a film to prospective

renters was to write up a rental ticket, look down, and see *Beyond the Door* on their pen. Barfi! Another couple bucks added to the grand total of the night – smart business, plain and simple.

With the use of posters and standees, grabbing attention for certain Media titles was rather easy – no matter where you looked, you were able to see one of their films lingering on the walls of your local video shop. But in 1986, Media decided to take it one step further, creating a promotional light box tool for stores. This heavy plastic-framed box had the Media logo plastered on the top with an insert section over a white background allowing video shop owners to insert and change out the 3-D sculpted plastic insert of the film being promoted that month.

They made 3-D inserts for films like *A Nightmare on Elm Street 2-4*, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2* and a slew of other non-horror titles like *Santa Claus: The Movie* and *Death Wish 4*. These light boxes (when found) are highly valuable collector's items today, as during the Video Boom, the cost of these puppets is usually around the \$50 mark. Most stores either already had light boxes for posters or used the good of tape and thumbtack method. So it was a hard bullet to bite – as a result, there were only a limited amount of them sold to stores thus making it difficult to find them now amongst the ever-expanding collector market. When searching one out, take into consideration that they are plastic and very brittle, so body damage is common, with the lighting element sometimes being broken as well. Still, a killer collectable all the same.

During the peak of Media's existence, a lot of rental shops purchased videos in larger quantities than others. Some lucky stores received an award plaque which displayed some of the most sold/rented titles they stocked. This item is rarely seen and is quite collectable for nostalgia freaks of the video days!

Within the promotions, posters were a huge part of Media's success. The vast majority of the releases under the massive Media cloud had posters for each title. And for us horror fiends, they



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Did You Know?

Bruno Mattei (*SS Girls*) also directed such films as *Zombi 3*, *Rats*, *Night of the Zombies* and *Eyes Without a Face* (to name a few).

There's visible money
in this teen fantasy.



yet isn't nearly as valuable in the collector circuit as the aforementioned "killer" poster. But a cool collectible it remains!

In addition to all the trinkets and doodads issued alongside the release of a film, Media also kicked it up a notch by holding select viewings for business owners. In certain areas of the country, Media would team-up with local distributors to privately screen upcoming releases for video store owners to see if it was the type

often released certain posters at the best time of year to promote the horror catalog, near its related holiday. One of these has been seen online, that being the image of a mass gathering of cinematic killers including Leatherface, Frank Zito from *Maniac*, Michael Myers and the whacked-out brothers from *Mother's Day*. This small poster is one of the most sought after and difficult items to find in Media's history. In earlier years, another poster was also made for Media around Halloween containing several video box art images plastered inside a movie theater-style light box. This poster is hard to come across,

of film they (the owners) were looking for. These screenings were few in number, most often representing the latest films to hit the horror circuit on home video. However, some conservative store owners were very selective with the subject matter they would allow on their shelves, causing Media's marketing stunt to occasionally result in "good" films being taken off the prospective shopping list rather than added to it! Thankfully, most clerks working at video stores let a lot slide, wanting to get the most money per rental. (As everyone knows, gore and nudity sell quite well.) Even so, it was good to see a company put forth the effort to make a film's release that much more meaningful as opposed to just an info sheet in a trade magazine.

Media Home Entertainment: A memorable icon to VHS collectors and horror fiends alike! 🍷

Thanks to: Patrick, Mark Crowder, Michael Felsher, Bob Stender, Larry New, Don Gibbs, Kevin and Phil at KO Video in Richmond, Virginia.



MEDIA HOME VIDEO HORROR BODY COUNT:

1. Abduction
2. Albino (Media Yellow Box)
3. American Nightmare
4. Assault on Precinct 13
5. Attack of the Killer Tomatoes
6. Basket Case
7. Beyond Evil
8. Beyond Reason
9. Beyond the Door
10. Beyond the Door II
11. Big Meat Eater
12. Black Cat, The (Fido)
13. Blackenstein (Media Yellow Box)
14. Blackenstein (Media Blue Box)
15. Blades
16. Blood and Black Lace
17. Blood Beach
18. Bloodbath at the House of Death
19. Boggy Creek II
20. Cardiac Arrest
21. Carnage
22. Centerfold Girls, The
23. C.H.U.D.
24. Ciss of Nuke 'Em High
25. Creature
26. Curse, The
27. Dark, The
28. Dark Forces
29. Dark Ride, The
30. Day of the Animals
31. Day of the Dead
32. Day of the Triffids, The
33. Dead Ringers
34. Deathrow Gameshow
35. Demerited
36. Demonoid
37. Devil Times Five
38. Dogs of Hell
39. Don't Answer the Phone
40. Don't Go in the House
41. Dorn That Dropped Blood, The (AKA: Franks)
42. Dracula Blows His Cool
43. Dracula Sucks
44. End of the World
45. Evil Judgment
46. Fade to Black
47. Fangoria's Weekend of Horrors
48. Fatal Games
49. Fifth Floor, The
50. Freeway Maniac, The
51. Glove, The
52. Grizzly
53. Grotasque
54. Halloween (Media)
55. Halloween (Media Yellow Box)
56. Halloween (Media Black Box)
57. Hatchet for the Honeymoon
58. Haunted Stranger, The
59. Haunted Summer
60. Hounding of Julia, The
61. Haunts
62. Hearse, The
63. Hell Night
64. Home Sweet Home
65. Horror Express
66. House of Shadows
67. House the Vanished, The (Media Yellow Box)
68. I Drink Your Blood (UK Only)
69. I, Madman
70. Invaders from Mars
71. Invisible Kid, The
72. Killer Klowns from Outer Space
73. Ladies Club, The
74. Laserblast (Media)
75. Laserblast (Media Yellow Box)
76. Last Horror Film, The
77. Lift, The
78. Lurkers
79. Maniac
80. Most Dangerous Game, The
81. Mother's Day
82. Nightbreed
83. Night of the Living Dead (Media)
84. Night of the Living Dead (Media Yellow Box)
85. Night of the Living Dead (Media Pink Box)
86. Nightmare on Elm Street, A
87. Nightmare on Elm Street, A Part 2: Freddy's Revenge
88. Nightmare on Elm Street, A Part 3: Dream Warriors
89. Nightmare on Elm Street, A Part 4: The Dream Master
90. Nightmare on Elm Street, A Part 5: The Dream Child
91. Nocturna, Granddaughter of Dracula (Media)
92. Psychomania (Media Yellow Box)
93. Psychomania (Media Skull Rider Painting)
94. Rabbit Grannies
95. Raw Force
96. Scanners 2: The New Order
97. Scared to Death
98. Schizo
99. Seduction, The
100. Shattered
101. Silent Madness
102. Silent Scream
103. Skullduggery
104. Slaves of Love
105. Sleepaway Camp
106. Silthia (Media Yellow Box)
107. Silthia (Media Blue Box)
108. Spontaneous Combustion
109. SS Girls
110. Stone Cold Dead
111. Stuff Stephanie in the Incinerator
112. Surf Nazis Must Die
113. Terror
114. Terror on Tour
115. Texas Chainsaw Massacre, The
116. Texas Chainsaw Massacre, The 2
117. Thirst
118. Tintorea - Tiger Shark
119. To AV a Good Night
120. To Kill a Clown
121. Tourist Trap (Media Yellow Box)
122. Tourist Trap (Media Blue Box)
123. Uncanny, The
124. Wicker Man, The (Media)
125. Wicker Man, The (Media Yellow Box)
126. Wicker Man, The (Media New Logo)
127. Zombie Island Massacre

night WARNING

Within the opening minutes, you know *Night Warning* isn't playing it safe, as a gruesome and spectacular car crash gets things off to a rough and ready start. As the plot sets in, we find young Billy Lynch (Jimmy McNicholl) seemingly enjoying life with his Aunt Cheryl (Susan Tyrrell), after the death of his parents in the aforementioned accident (or was it?). Yet like most teenagers, Billy soon sets his sights on a pretty young thing, which doesn't lend itself well to 'ol Auntie. Aunt Cheryl doesn't want anything or anyone coming between her and her nephew, and she'll do anything to keep it that way... including murder. She finds the time to kill a plumber over some goofy sexual trysts, which opens up a bigger can of worms involving Billy's basketball coach and a detective played by cult fave Bo Svenson (*The Inglorious Bastards*). From here Auntie goes deeper and deeper into the realms of a ranting and raving movie psycho, giving other notable

which jobs a run for their money, including that other infamous female killer Mrs. Voorhees! Susan is quite frankly the star of the show here, and we are never really sure just what she'll do next. It is a testament to her performance, that without it, *Night Warning* would be strictly a by-the-numbers knife-kill fodder. Fans can also spot a young Bill Paxton among the crowd, along with former *Newhart* sitcom star Julia Duffy who plays Billy's love interest. Despite some up-and-coming stars, and a wonderful lead performance from Susan Tyrrell, *Night Warning* has yet to arrive on DVD, but it has been in-development under its original (and superior) moniker *Butcher Baker, Nightmare Maker*, and will hopefully arrive on the five-inch platter sometime soon. Fans looking for some sleaze, slimeball characters, and Susan Tyrrell at her most unchained, seek out *Night Warning!* — Dave Karger



OFFERINGS

By 1999, the slasher fad had all but fizzled out, and filmmakers completely and shamelessly began to copy the classics in a last-ditch effort to keep the subgenre alive. *Offerings* is a great example of a blatant reproduction of the classic '78 John Carpenter slasher *Halloween*. The films are so similar in fact, I think maybe Rob Zombie drew some inspiration from *Offerings* before making his own Halloween remake — both *Zombie* and *Offerings* began with the young blonde boy in the opening sequence accused by his mother of killing and torturing his pets, a prerequisite to a psychopath.

Even the original music for this copycat is an obvious mirror of Carpenter's all too iconic score, although, quite well delivered by composer Russell D. Allen (also responsible for scoring the low-budget '87 shot-on-video slasher *Blood Lake*). As the story begins we are introduced to John Radley, a young clearly troubled mute boy, and his cruel mother. A knock at the door reveals the boy's only friend named Gretchen who asks if he can come out and play. Soon enough young John and his female friend are set on by a group of mean children on bikes who begin to taunt and tease them. John is then dared to "walk the wall," a neighborhood rite of passage that requires him to circle the edge of an old deep dark narrow brick watering hole in a yard. John has no problem overcoming the task at hand, but was startled by one of the malicious boys causing him to plummet to the bottom, as the group panics and rides away. Flash forward 10 years, a doctor (played by director Christopher Reynolds) discusses the patient, John Radley, whose disfigured face gives a new attending nurse the creeps, and reveals John killed his mother and was caught eating her flesh before being institutionalized. Nurse Jackie is told to administer his sedative, which has been keeping him in a safe catatonic state for years now. Only he awakes a bit early and administers the shot to the Nurse's forehead instead, followed by the retraction of the plunger as we see it fill with blood. The mean kids are all grown up now, but still living normal suburban lives in the same old neighborhood as John seeks his retribution. Victims pile up as "Tim" is knocked unconscious and tied down to table in his own garage, his head placed firmly in a vice. As the killer shows Tim the chainsaw he plans to use on him, it is revealed that moments earlier Tim's mother asked him to fix the saw, as he has broken all the tools in the garage. John pulls and pulls the cord, but the saw won't start... he then grabs a drill, and right as it is to make contact with Tim's skull it stops working as well... this is where the fun nature of the film is revealed. I will not spoil Tim's ultimate fate, as I hope to have by now hooked you into giving this little cheapie a viewing for yourself. The film is available on DVD and a new copy can be purchased for around \$10 from Amazon.com. I hope you have fun with it... I know I did. — Lance Covel



THE PROWLER

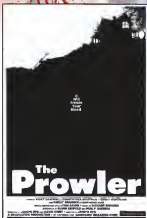
THE HORRORHOUND RETROSPECTIVE

by Matt Moore

In the heat of the early 1980s, horror films were on the rise. Gaining more and more momentum, thanks to the exploitation explosion of the mid-to-late 1970s, it was only natural that the world of human horror seen in the '70s was reborn onto the screen throughout the next decade. With this movement horror took a more serious turn and the reimagined carnage we only had heard about on TV began to invade our entertainment. The rise of the serial killer in the '70s gave way to the subgenre we all hold dear to our hearts, the slasher film.

In the fall of 1980, located in the historic little northeastern town of Cape May, New Jersey (historic is an understatement, as the town is more of a landmark), a new kind of film brutality, known as *The Prowler* was being conjured up (or for our foreign readers: *Rosemary's Killer*). This film tested the boundaries in terms of gore and fear, but still displayed all the fun of a slasher film. *The Prowler* succeeded where many slashers failed - it married fun entertainment and fear into an amalgam of horror.

With a \$1 million budget and a script in-hand that was penned by Glenn Leopold and Neal Barbera (son of Barbara from Hanna-Barbera, who in turn actually wrote episodes of *The Smurfs* and other Hanna-Barbera cartoons before writing *The Prowler*). Director Joseph Zito attacked the script with a very liberal approach to filmmaking, which helped give the film a more natural feel, from the acting to the execution of the scares faced throughout the 90 minutes of bloody terror. *The Prowler* was shot in a little over 30 days, and being an effects-heavy film, whole days were dedicated to the set-up and execution of Tom Savini's ruthless kills. Savini was given more freedom to perfect his craft, and that he did. Seeing the intense kills within *The Prowler*, you see that time and perfection was taken to enhance the fear and realism (a scene where Cindy Wientraub gets a boot to the head took 18 takes before Zito got the shot she wanted). Zito never storyboarded *The Prowler*, it was his strong communi-



Original US One-Sheet for *The Prowler*

cation that eased the chaos most commonly associated with film productions.

Casting for this film was unusual by today's standards. Most of the actors in *The Prowler*, except for Lawrence Tierney and Farley Granger, were either soap opera actors or new to the industry - a move to help enhance the character realism that made this film special to moviegoers. This production also marks the first collaboration between Joe Zito and Tom Savini, leading to a number of further projects the duo later worked on together - films including *Friday the 13th*, *The Final Chapter*, *Red Scorpion* (with Dolph Lundgren; *He-Man*) and *Invasion U.S.A.* with martial arts icon Chuck Norris.

The storyline of the film plays out in typical slasher fashion, but with a bit more sympathetic history behind the madness of the killer. Upon receiving a "Dear John" letter from his beloved Rosemary, while fighting the good fight during World War II, our killer learns that Rosemary doesn't want to wait any longer and is leaving him for another suitor. Enraged by this, the "Prowler", armed in his fatigues, searches out Rosemary Chatham and her new beloved to enact his revenge. The perfect night approaches with the school graduation dance (*The Graduation* was actually one of *The Prowler's* shooting titles at one point). Rosemary and her date arrive to the social event and soon leave for a quiet

gazebo rendezvous. *The Prowler* sees this and makes his move. He cuts the lights and advances to the couple, who are clouded in the night, and makes a human shish cabob out of the two (thanks to his trusty pitch-fork). After that night, the town graduation dance ceases as a result of the gruesome murders...

Inevitably, a new graduating class 35 years later, led by our heroine, Pam (Vickey Dawson), wishes to resurrect this old traditional dance. A group of kids come together to pull it off, and while all is going well, the town's sinister backstory soon



From right to left: Various VHS interpretations of *The Prowler* from around the world. Top row: VCI Beta, Big Box and Small Box VHS slip-cases (US).

Bottom row: Star Classics (UK), Asahi Video (UK/PAL), AV-Data Du Reel (French), Video Classics Gold (Australian), K-S Video (Belgian) and Wistron (Japan).

Fun Fact: Thanks to *The Prowler*, Joe Zito got the directing gig for *Friday the 13th: The Final Chapter*!

HorrorHound 39

wakes from the dead. Information is passed on to the Sheriff Fraser (Farley Granger) that a store was robbed and the bandit's head is heading toward the town. He alerts his deputy, Mark London (played by Christopher Goutman), as the sheriff is getting ready to leave for his annual fishing trip. Tension eases as the day moves on with minimal occurrences during the preparation of the dance.

We see the Prowler (played by Peter Giuliano) suit up, ready to end this dance in similar fashion to 1945. Armed with a sawed-off double-barrel shotgun, a 16" bayonet, an ankle knife and his signature pitchfork, the Prowler disappears into the night to stalk his fresh prey. This first kill in his reprisal of carnage is probably one of the most sadistic and brutal kills in slasher film history: a guy getting ready to "get his rocks off" with a young lady that's in the shower, checks the doors

does a few looks around to see if anyone is around, then he sits on the bed, starting to unbutton his shirt and - the Prowler appears - slamming a bayonet through the top of his head. For this scene Savini donned the Prowler's suit himself, so the effects were captured just right. The blood poured from the victim's head as he opened his eyes wide - revealing that they have rolled back in his skull, exposing nothing but the pure white of his eyes. This poor sap's slow death was chilling. The Prowler then turns his attention to the

lady walling in the shower (one of the longest on-screen showers caught on tape). Cleaning off his bayonet, our killer then goes on in the steam-filled bathroom. Thinking it's her "plaything," the young girl opens the door and to her dismay a pitchfork is thrust into her gut as the killer raises her up a good three feet in the air.

After this murder, Pam has an encounter with the Prowler as she comes back to her room for a quick change (due to a mishap earlier at the dance). This leads to a typical slasher chase, although much of the chase barely includes the killer. Once she escapes, she is grabbed by Major Chatham (who happens to be Rosemary Chatham's father). The character of Major Chatham (Lawrence Tierney; more famous for his role as boss Joe Cabot in *Reservoir Dogs*) is a very detached and still-mourning father living out his final days in ease, but is placed in awkward scenes throughout the film that really don't make a whole lot of sense, and it adds a weird underlying story to the movie that strays too far into the



Japanese Chinshi (front and back)



Japanese Movie Ticket

swim - her head almost completely severed by the Prowler's bayonet. Once the chaperone is informed of the missing girl, she begins to search, and incidentally, meets her own death rather quickly near the pool. From there, the story leads to a detective mystery involving Pam and Deputy London. They soon discover the truth about Major Chatham and the myths behind his daughter, Rosemary. They try desperately to get in touch with the sheriff, to no avail, so they continue their investigation and receive a tip regarding some kids messing around in the cemetery. Moving their investigation, it's at the cemetery that they discover that the grave of Rosemary Chatham has been unearthed. Things begin to click with the two as they decide to do more digging (no pun intended). One thing about the scene at the cemetery that director Joe Zito loathed was the cheapness of the headstone. It looked awfully artificial and he has made several comments about it in different interviews and commentaries, but that is one of those details that most fans overlook. The suspense the film delivered, with some of the best kills in the genre, always seems to take precedence in fan's minds. The cemetery scene was actually filmed on Halloween night and was in a real cemetery in Cape May. The plot was dug earlier for a funeral that was being held later in that week, so the realism of the fresh gravesites truly added to the film.

As the mystery continues, they soon find themselves the prey of the Prowler. At one point we cleverly see the deputy fade away from the picture, only to appear later - a movie trick to make us believe that he was "done in" by the masked maniac. Pam fights back against the killer with everything she's got as the Prowler's identity is finally revealed. ... It's the sheriff - George Fraser (Farley Granger)! Barely saved by a guy from the local grocery

whodunit aspect of the film. After escaping the grip of Chatham, Pam runs to find Deputy London. After telling him of her chase, and the creepy incident with Major Chatham, this prompts the deputy to take a look around. While not finding much, he takes it one step further and gets one of the chaperones to announce there was a "prowler" on the grounds and that people needed to remain indoors. Unfortunately this announcement was made too late for one of the girls, Lisa (played by Cindy Weintraub), as she left from the dance and met her demise in the local pool - a very convincing and violent end for an innocent girl looking for a quick



Japanese Movie Program



Italian Locandina



Spanish One-Sheet Style B



US One-Sheet (Allstate Title)



DVDs from around the world, including *The Prowler* US, German, Polish, Spanish and Australian discs

store (when he shoots at the sheriff, but misses), the struggle between Pam and the Prowler persists before coming to a close when the gun is put under the Sheriff's chin and - Blamo!

Thinking all is done, Pam reunites with her beau and retreats to her dorm. She hears the water still running, and in one final attempt at a scare, the couple killed in the beginning of our film are still in the shower, when magically, the guy that got the bayonet in the head reaches for Pam as the film doses. The final scare is common and used very often in the slasher subgenre. While the set up and execution of the sequence doesn't really scare you, it does make you ponder the question: why didn't the cops find them? They were missing and they never even made it to the dance, but that's a question that will remain unanswered.

Upon its completion, the film's backers shopped *The Prowler* around to a few sources, one of which was distribution juggernaut: Avco Embassy. Avco Embassy was responsible for the distribution of such horror gems as *The Howling*, *Fear No Evil* and *Phantasm*. Throughout negotiations the film's owners wanted to recoup their

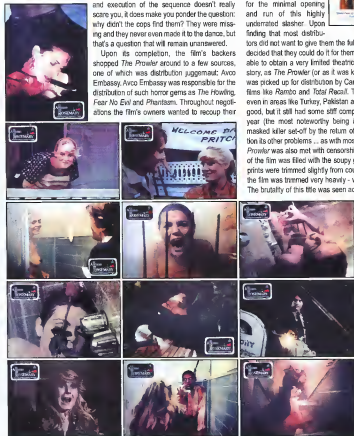
original investment and after Avco made a low-ball offer for distribution, the producers decided to end talks with Avco and seek out other new possible leads - a move that might have just been the cause for the minimal opening and run of this highly underrated slasher. Upon finding that most distributors did not want to give them the full dollar amount they were looking for, they decided that they could do it for themselves. In doing so, *The Prowler* was only able to obtain a very limited theatrical run, but overseas there was a different story, as *The Prowler* (or as it was known across the pond, *Rosemary's Killer*) was picked up for distribution by Carolco. You might recognize that name from films like *Rambo* and *Total Recall*. The title was screened across Europe and even in areas like Turkey, Pakistan and Japan. For a slasher film, that was very good, but it still had some stiff competition from other heavyweights the same year (the most noteworthy being *My Bloody Valentine*, which itself had a masked killer set-off by the return of a long-banned town dance). Not to mention its other problems... as with most slashers from the States at that time, *The Prowler* was also met with censorship and controversy. While the theatrical cut of the film was filled with the soupy gore we love here in the US, the overseas prints were trimmed slightly from country to country. In some parts of the world the film was trimmed very heavily - with as much as 10-plus minutes removed. The brutality of this title was seen across the board, even Joe Zito had a situation



Belgian Poster for *Rosemary's Killer*

at a 42nd Street theatre where, after he explained to a security guard who he was, the guard came back with, "I have seen your movie, you killed those people." Now, in any horror director's mind, that has to be a compliment... that the gore and kills were so well done that you have somehow convinced people that what they saw was actually someone being killed! Definitely the icing on the cake.

As we had seen in the US theatrical posters, *The Prowler* looked almost tame when compared side-by-side with similar titles, but the art was matched with some of the best taglines ever assigned to a slasher film. Examples of these lines include, "The human exterminator" and "It will freeze your blood." While overseas, many of the posters had the gruesome images of the pool demise (example) or, as seen in Japan, we were treated to one of the most ferocious images in the film (as well as in the slasher age of the '80s) - that of the bayonet-through-the-head



Complete Set of 12 Spanish Lobby Cards



UK Quad for Rosemary's Killer

big screen did not pan out that the new and upcoming home video market would reinvigorate their product. *The Prowler* was released by VCI, a leg of VCI, a very well known adult film company from California who is still around to this day. *The Prowler* was released in Big Box form, as well as in a Small Box, utilizing the infamous pool exorcism that was used countless times overseas. Later on, in the States, *The Prowler* was released again thanks to budget king Star Classics with an oddball image on the cover that didn't really sell the film too well, and as a result, didn't allow the film to reach very many rental shops. In the foreign market, the VHS release of *Rosemary's Killer* faced the same challenges as it did with its theatrical release. A lot of European countries trimmed chunks of it out, and surprisingly, it didn't end up on the now-infamous Video Nasties list in the UK. It had far more reasons to be on the list than films such as *Don't Go in the House*, where no blood is seen throughout the entire movie. But with that, it made the title more intriguing to some newcomers. The *Prowler*'s rental market life came to an unfortunate close in the late 1980s. The film actually went out of print and became very difficult to find. Some stores eventually discounted the title and moved it off their shelves entirely to make

room for newer movies, adding to *The Prowler*'s rarity. Still to this day, even with an official DVD release, *The Prowler*'s VHS tapes can go in the collectors market for decent amount of money - in any condition, foreign or domestic.

The Resurrection of a Classic

After the height of the video craze of the 1980s many films went out of print and faded away until the rise of DVD. It took some time for *The Prowler* to get its official release, but upon its first outing, the horror DVD heavyweight Blue Underground

delivered a triple threat. Blue Underground, a new company at the time, released *The Prowler* along with *The Toolbox Murders* and *Shockwaves* (their first three discs to reach market), helping establish this company as a force to be reckoned with in the horror industry - especially considering it's owner - Bill Lustig - was the director of *Maniac* and other slashermania fare. Finally, this film had its rebirth into the digital age. Looking back on the DVD release, we were given a special effects reel straight from Savini's personal collection, as well as a few posters and stills in the gallery section. But the most enjoyable part of this release, outside of the remastered image and better color, was the Zito/Savini commentary. This commentary track provided plenty of tid bits of information for one of the most underrated slashers of all time.

During the preparation of the DVD of *The Prowler*, Zito was asked if he ever thought about doing a sequel. He laughed and said he never thought about it, but since we see the Sheriff's head explode at the hands of Pam, the likelihood that our on-screen killer could return is slim to none. But you never know... Jason has been killed more times than any character in horror history. Maybe the *Prowler* can finally give him a run for his money!

UK 'Front of House' Still Set



UK One-Sheet



Turkish Poster



Spanish One-Sheet Style A
Left: Set of 8 Mexican Lobby Cards

Q UINTESSENTIAL SLASHERS

1 - Friday the 13th - Jason may be the icon now, but it was his mother, Pamela Voorhees, who made *Friday the 13th* one of the most famous days of the year! Released in 1980, *Friday the 13th* took the basic elements first seen in *Halloween* and *Black Christmas* and instilled a new set of standards: the creepy camp, overly sex-crazed teens, unimpressive kills, and the "motive" surprise ending. More importantly - they showed you the gore - something their predecessors never relished in. Prior to "*Friday's*" release, camp comedies were the rave (headlined by Bill Murray's *Meatballs*). Taking such a fun/safe place such as summer camp and adding a little murder helped make the camp killer flick such an effective and popular trend for years to come.

2 - A Nightmare on Elm Street - It has always been a showdown of sorts between Jason, Leatherface and Freddy - but in the 1980s, nobody stacked the bodies up like Freddy! Not only was this inventive killer docked out in a deathly sharp razorblade-fingered glove, but he never let the glove stifle his imagination. Throughout the '80s Freddy turned your nightmares into the most impressive resumé of on-screen kills ever witnessed, including death by waterbed, motorcycle, roachtrap, glutty, television or even sleepwalking ... And the success of this formula set the bar for all slashers that followed.

3 - Child's Play - In 1988 the slasher genre followed in Freddy's path by creating inventive new killers, helping to set standard slasher fare apart from one another. How better to do that than making your knife-wielding maniac a children's play toy. Trapped in the body of a plastic "Good Guy Doll," Charles Lee Ray (Brad Dourif) set-off on a five-picture roller-scream becoming one of most iconic cinematic characters of the time. He also racked up one of the highest body counts throughout the 1980s.

4 - My Bloody Valentine - The phrase "quintessential slasher" is often used to describe the original *My Bloody Valentine* - and for good reason. The masked killer with his iconic look, trademark weapon, mysterious backstory, the gory body count, the holiday theme ... it's all there! Possibly the most annoying aspect of this original film is the fact that it took over 15 years before someone finally made another one!

5 - Texas Chainsaw Massacre: Part 2 - One of the most arguable films on this list, there has been great debate over whether "TCM" should be considered a slasher. The original hosted so many of those "key ingredients," including obnoxious teens snooping around a mysterious house when, suddenly, a masked killer comes at them with a chainsaw. The sequel, however, spun the genre on its head with added goofiness and gore. Sure, you get a chainsaw-dueling Dennis Hopper vs. Leatherface, but you also get some of the creepiest characters caught on-screen (Chop Top and Nubbins) and one of the best jump scares in history!

6 - The Burning - It may have come out a year after *Friday the 13th*, and boasted a similar setting (kids in the woods), and even featured Tom Savini makeup FX, but aside from all those similarities, *The Burning* still holds up today as one of the scariest films with possibly the most unnerving-looking killer caught on screen. Anyone who can make it to the "canoe massacre" (those who have seen it - don't run it for the others) can attest that this movie definitely brings the gory slasher movie goods!

7 - Prom Night - Jamie Lee Curtis may be the most recognizable scream queen and it's due to her overabundance of slasher roles, starting with *Halloween* in 1978, and steamrolling through *Prom Night* and *Terror Train* ... Like some of the best films on this list, *Prom Night* received plenty of sequel action (and a bad 2008 remake). While the ski-masked killer's look is unoriginal, his stalk and chase scenes are downright terrifying. The fact that this movie hit the same year as *Friday the 13th* helps cement it as a classic, and in turn helped cement the slasher as the most popular subgenre of horror for the next 10 years!

8 - Sleepaway Camp - If you haven't seen this film, don't Google it. Just hop onto Netflix and give it a spin. Released a couple years after both *Friday the 13th* and *The Burning* (and a few other camping slashers), *Sleepaway Camp* was a direct result of the slasher boom. The ending of this film, however, is why it is remembered and considered must-viewing material for any burgeoning slasher fan.

9 - Happy Birthday to Me - An unconventional slasher, "*Happy Birthday*" has more similarities to the *Gas!o*, if not for the overusage of the "clever kill" set-up which was so popular for the time. The movie poster featured the tagline, "Six of the most bizarre murders you will ever see." It didn't hurt that the movie was actually pretty good and featured one of the best posters in horror history.

10 - April Fool's Day - Is what you're watching real or just a really mean joke? The plot of *April Fool's Day* is very true to its title. Muffy, a rich college girl, invites her best friends to her private island resort to party all weekend, and play victim to a string of murders that could be perpetrated by their host herself. This film is most remembered as one of the bookends of the slasher craze, putting a cap on the '80s trend. It made plenty of viewers upset, but many "slasher kids" defend it as one of the most memorable films of the decade. - Nathan Henneman and Aaron Crowl



RETURN OF THE FAMILY MAN

"Daddy... Please don't kill me" - one of the many dark taglines for this underdog slasher that reared its head at the close of the '80s stalker sensation. Shot in South Africa, the film is a fun example of a title found within this subgenre that shakes off many of its common conventions. Filled with bad one-liners and overflowing with '80s clichés, it still proves a nice change of pace with a sizable body count and some truly mean spirited moments. Sadly, most of the gory death scenes occur slightly off-screen and none of the female cast steps down to their Britney suits, however, they do a decent job of making us care about the characters and able to convince the viewers it was filmed in America. Often considered a Halloween-meets-Stepfather rip-off (and I will not argue with that), it does achieve its goal if only a bit awkwardly. The story follows a pizza delivery boy named Aiden who upon delivering a pizza to a hotel, witnesses a drug deal turned bloodbath with the lone surviving hitman threatening to kill him. Fearing for his life, he turns to his ex-girlfriend Vickie for help, who is planning a vacation with her now-boyfriend Brian, that involves a rented estate in a small town called Borden. She invites Aiden along so he can hideout from the mobster mussed to Brian's chagrin. Incidentally, a foreign tour group led by the overly tanned blond bombshell Libby, that includes Weasel, a Billy idol looking London punk, Marty, the nerdy but funny Hindu Indian, French cutie Sylvie, and African goopy two-shoes Evelyn, have also rented the same mansion for the week. Which leads us to our titular character Mark Allen Shekder (Ron Smerczak; 1974's *House of Wax*) or as the media has dubbed him, "The Family Man Murderer," who received 31 consecutive life sentences after he was found guilty for the murders of several families beginning with his own.

Only on this very same day it just so happens he is to be extradited to a new prison by bus. After being man-handled by a guard, Shekder is able to escape, but not before viciously slaughtering everyone on board followed by one of his many inappropriate trademarked one-liners, "Thanks," the first word he has spoken after nearly 11 years of complete silence. Meanwhile, our two groups of young adults (who act like teens) meet and realize they have been duped as the mansion is worthy of being condemned. Aiden, desperate to hideout, convinces the groups to make the best of the situation as they all agree to stay. The house, as you may have guessed by now, is the vacant home of the Family Man's deceased yet never-recovered family's remains. The now-at-large Shekder then stumbles upon an unwitting family barbecuing out back of their middle class suburban home with a young boy innocently offering the killer a burnt hamburger. The Family Man, of course, murders them all (little kids included) screaming, "I'm Sorry!" then placing the blood drenched bodies around their very own dinner table, in the most disturbingly dark sequence found in the film, while watching their TV set, curled up on the couch. As the vacationers begin to disappear the killer's return home is revealed as the group must now fend for their lives as a typical '80s A-Team style montage of getting-things-done to bad music ensues with the group setting and creating traps to snare the Family Man. But you did not see that one coming. The film is fun, quirky, filled with some good gore, and in the end is worthy of your time, only sorry... this one's not on DVD either. It still can be purchased on VHS both new and used from half.com for viewers still willing and thrilling to the old school home video experience.

- Aaron Crowl

SHOCKER

In 1989 Wes Craven attempted to capture lightning in a bottle for the second time with *Shocker*. The results, depending on who you ask, were less than to be desired. Possibly the most widely known film in this entire ABC's of '80s Slashers, *Shocker* started off as a for-hire project for Carolco Pictures. Still not off the success of *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, studios clamoring for the next big franchise - and who better to provide than the father of Freddy Krueger himself. After a misfire attempt with *Deadly Friend* (1986), and decent success with *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (1988), Craven set down to create the next big slasher icon. What he came up with was Horace Pinker (played by Mitch Pileggi of *X-Files* fame). A serial killer with a voodoo background, the story centered on young Jonathan Parker (Peter Berg, *Collateral*) who has some sort of connection with Pinker. In fact, Jonathan dreams of his own Step-Mother and sister's murders at the hands of Pinker - in a to-this-day riveting film opening. Using these visions, Parker helps his father (who happens to be a police lieutenant) hunt down Pinker. After an impressive body count, the police finally apprehend the killer, who is quickly sent to death row. Following the quickest sentencing and execution known to man - Horace is electrocuted. Unfortunately for everyone involved, Horace had performed a ritual prior to his death that gave him the power to continue his killing spree. Now with the ability to jump from body to body, the only one who can stop Pinker is young Jonathan. Secrets are revealed as the movie rollovers towards one of the most insane, yet memorable, dimaxes ever caught on film - as Jonathan somehow drags Pinker's soul into the television - as they duke it out from channel to channel, interacting with such programs as *Bride of Frankenstein*, *Leave it to Beaver*, *Alice Cooper* music videos, war and news footage - all to the sound of heavy metal!

While the movie is definitely schlocky at moments with some laughable tag lines spouted by the killer (in all of his on-screen forms) ... including the film's quote, "No more Mr. Nos Guy!" ... the movie still host some absolutely chilling moments (the ghostly appearance of Allison (Camille Cooper) in the lake for example). The character of Jonathan is haunted by the death's of his friends and family. The murder's are handled almost too real. If not for the supernatural elements, *hokery* effects and dialog, the movie would be downright scary and no doubt have successfully spawned the franchise Carolco so madly dreamed of. Horace Pinker is still one of the most requested "Maniacs" yet to see toy form, and this is partly due to Craven's success at envisioning a new icon for the horror genre. Mitch Pileggi's burnt head and fashionable orange prisoner garb is instantly recognizable. In a world where Freddy and Jason are being rebooted for today's audience, one would hope Pinker will be retooled, the obvious problems to the story fixed, and - we could only guess, repackaged as a 3-D experience... time will tell. - Nathan Harnescu



TRUTH OR DARE? A CRITICAL MADNESS

Florida screenwriter/filmmaker Tim Ritter's low budget '80s slasher-on-video horror films are often regarded as garbage by many (but still remain on the top of the rubbish heap, as far as this viewer is concerned). Easily his most entertaining film is *Truth or Dare?* A Critical Madness directed by Yale Wilson, and I am not ashamed to admit it is one of my favorite films of the '80s. Originally released by Peerless Films in 1986 the story follows Mike Strauber, a really nice guy who after catching his wife, Sharon, in bed with his supposed buddy, Jerry, goes off the deep end. It's revealed that Mike had a few mental issues as a child involving a game of Truth or Dare (and a razor blade). Strauber rents a camp site for the night with a sexy hitchhiker he picks up along the way as he revisits the game, leading to quite a bit of self mutilation (proving how sick this guy is). Bleeding profusely, Mike's found and taken to the hospital where he is then committed. Released later, due to overcrowding, he sets out to exact revenge on the cheating couple. Killing Jerry, Mike fails to snuff out Sharon before he is wounded and returned to the hospital and committed yet again. Mike then convinces the patients in the asylum to play Truth or Dare? with him in the most unforgettably fun scene where he somehow is able to get a hand grenade in and convinces a disturbed man to place it in his mouth with the pin pulled. As the game escalates more self mutilation occurs as Mike uses a survival knife to rip off his face, when the group is discovered, Mike yells "war!" as the camera pans to the man with the grenade in his mouth as his head explodes with no pull away. We then see Strauber laughing in glee. He later fashions together a crappy copper mask and kills the interns to escape the asylum embarking on an adventure of further madness and murder. The film stands as Ritter's answer to the slasher era that was winding down at the time. A few fun scenes involve Strauber taking the time to turn his stolen car around to kill an innocent kid leaving a baseball field (via drive-by chainsawing) and a bitchy old woman who gets whacked in the head with a spiked medieval mace! *Truth or Dare?* is over-the-top slasher fun that can not be denied and the acting is not as bad as you might expect. Sadly not available in the states, it was released to DVD by Odeon Entertainment on PAL Region 2. — Aaron Crowell

UNHINGED

Don Cronquist's 1982 bore of a slasher film, *Unhinged*, is a great example of how merely having provocative artwork could get your film banned as part of the UK's Video Nasty craze in the 1980s. The film follows three young females on their way to a jazz concert, who end up in a nasty car wreck on the way there. They then wake up in an old mansion in the middle of the woods, and are taken in by a strange family. Soon, the trio begin to be stalked by a shadowy presence.

While the setup sounds promising, this Halloween rip-off is about as boring as they come. At its best the surprisingly ample nudity (the actors were locals from Portland, Oregon) and handful of frenetic gore-pieces give *Unhinged* an atmosphere somewhat akin to another slasher released the same year, *Pieces*. Unfortunately, with these few exceptions, the picture is largely an exercise in hilariously awful acting, awful directing, and awful storytelling. Cronquist has never met an awkward scene transition he didn't like, and appears to have instructed his actors to go "Full Shatner." It's a shame too, because the twist ending could have been one for the books. — Eric Newell

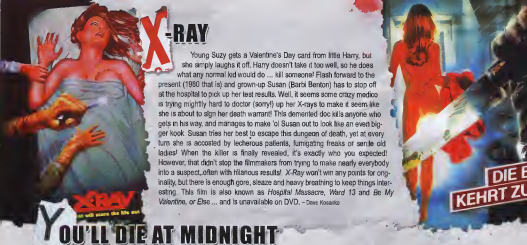
VISITING HOURS

Lee Grant plays a TV personality with a strong feminine voice, which doesn't set too well with some of her viewers, especially psycho Michael Ironside. He sets off to teach her how to keep her mouth shut. But after a botched attempt, which only took his victim on a trip to the hospital, he has to devise a new plan to finish what he started.

Not a lot of depth in this movie, but there's no need for it. The main reason to watch this film is for the brilliance that is Michael Ironside. This was his first big role after David Cronenberg's *Scanners*, and it's a beauty. This film shows the real talent of Ironside's acting ability, since his character has very little dialog in the movie, but because of his facial expressions alone, his performance speaks volumes. The film also stars William Shatner whose inclusion was purely for marquee value. Linda Purl stars as the nurse assigned to take care of Grant that somehow gets tangled up in Ironside's hunt for Grant's character. For an '80s slasher film, it is lacking a lot of the good stuff, like boobs and blood, but watching Ironside on the screen should be enough to keep any horror fan happy — Jon Killey



More commonly known as *Nightmare Beach* (it was hard finding an '80s slasher that started with the letter 'W'), *Welcome to Spring Break* is actually an Italian feature that most horror fans recognize as a giallo. The film has a much more American feel (in special thanks to the leading actors — including John Saxon — and the fact that it was filmed in Fort Lauderdale, Florida) and is loaded with some of the craziest kills caught on film. Directed by Umberto Lenzi (*Nightmare City*, *Cannibal Ferox*), and released in 1988, the film begins with the execution of Diablo, the leader of a notorious biker gang. Two years after his death, during spring break, a mysterious killer in a biker's outfit begins to kill the out-of-control teens during their joyous beach week! What makes the kills more insane is that they revolve around being electrocuted. Could Diablo have survived his execution, could he be back from the dead, could a friend or past lover be out for revenge, or could it just all be a coincidence? The fact that Diablo's corpse has disappeared doesn't help. The most memorable aspect of this film, outside of John Saxon's participation, is the fact that the killer has decked out his bike with the ability to electrocute a riding passenger. Logic be damned! By the end of the film 10 people are dead and a surprise reveal is intact as the audience learns of the killer's origin/motive. The film was released onto DVD under its *Welcome to Spring Break* moniker back in 2004 thanks to Arisan and is definitely worth the purchase. — Nathan Hazzard



Young Suzy gets a Valentine's Day card from little Harry, but she simply laughs it off. Harry doesn't take it too well, so he does what any normal kid would do ... kill someone! Flash forward to the present (1980 that is) and grown-up Susan (Barbi Benton) has to stop off at the hospital to pick up her test results. Well, it seems some crazy medco is trying mightily hard to doctor (sorry!) up her X-rays to make it seem like she is about to sign her death warrant! This demented doc kills anyone who gets in his way, and manages to make 'ol Susan out to look like an even bigger kook. Susan tries her best to escape this dungeon of death, yet at every turn she is accosted by lecherous patients, fumigating freaks or senile old ladies! When the killer is finally revealed, it's exactly who you expected! However, that didn't stop the filmmakers from trying to make nearly everybody into a suspect, often with hilarious results! X-Ray won't win any points for originality, but there is enough gore, sleaze and heavy breathing to keep things interesting. This film is also known as *Hospital Massacre*, *Ward 13* and *Be My Valentine, or Else ...* and is unavailable on DVD. — Dave Kossakio

YOU'LL DIE AT MIDNIGHT

An Italian import and, considered a giallo, *You'll Die at Midnight* closely mimics the conventions found in most '80s American slashers. Also known as *Midnight Ripper*, this stylish slasher follows a string of murders as police investigators, a group of psych students, and their female teacher all try to unravel the mystery surrounding the mounting body count of mostly female victims. Could it be Franco Tribbo, the serial killer dubbed "The Midnight Ripper," who is believed to have died in a fire at the sanitarium he was committed to years earlier? Maybe it is Alberto, the only male psych student in the group, or just maybe it's the lead inspector's daughter who takes the group to a closed down deserted hotel to study and kick back for a few days. In the end, our voyeuristic needs are fulfilled with the violent murders of a nurse, a saleswoman, two of the young students, a police officer's unfaithful wife (in a shower scene, ala *Psycho*) and her policeman husband. The killer's weapon

of choice goes from ice pick to knife, with one female victim even enduring an electric cake mixer between the legs. At the close, we learn who the killer is (in a half-ass Scooby-Doo style reveal) in a bit of a shock. The lead investigator reveals he knew it all along (then, I ask, why not do something about it sooner?). Lamberto Bava (son of Mario) still delivers a fun and thrilling slasher-whodunit sure to excite fans of this subgenre. Good luck finding a copy, however, as it was never released on VHS or DVD here in the States. It can be found under the title *Midnight Ripper* on PAL Region 2 DVD from a German company simply titled "X" as part of their X-Rated Italo-Giallo-Series. The film also features a wonderful score from legendary Italian composer and Goblin frontman, Claudio Simonini! (*Deep Red*, *Dawn of the Dead*, *Tenative* and *Welcome to Spring Break*, just to name a few). — Aaron Crowell



ZANY SLASHERS

In 1984 a fellow by the name of Fred Krueger entered cinema with his fedora, red and green-striped sweater, clawed-gloves and burnt face, who could enter your dreams, where you were most vulnerable. Horror films were never the same again. While the term zany may not be an appropriate description for *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, it sure can be used when describing many of its sequels - which incorporated novelties such as 3-D, wizards and warms. Dipped in a character dubbed "Super Freddy" and it was this type of slasher film that studios started to imitate throughout the next few years. Even Wes Craven's *Shocker* stole many of the zany elements from Krueger's repertoire. In 1988 the epitome of Freddy's attitude was placed in a kids doll with *Child's Play*. The killer-doll film has been done before; in fact Stuart Gordon's *Dolls* was released just one year prior, but the stalking toy picture became all the rage thanks to this four-hour-plus play thing. Full Moon's *Puppet Master* series being the most iconic followers - chalking up eight sequels to date.

Comedic parodies went hand-in-hand with many other slashers of the '80s, poking fun at the entire horror genre and its conventions. Some of the most notable were *Student Bodies* (see High School Slashers), *Waco* (a hard film to track down, but is worth it just for the "lawnmower massacre" killer, played by George Kennedy of *The Naked Gun* fame) and *Psychos in Love* (which follows a strip-joint owner and a Marxist who happen to be serial killers. After falling in love, they soon discover their plumber is also harboring similar qualities).

In *American Gothic* (1987), a seemingly normal looking family has a terrible secret. Their mentally impaired child is quite an inventive killer. Give this picture a spin, and you will definitely blurt the word "zany" when describing it at the water cooler the next day.

Terror in the Asiles is an interesting title worth mentioning. Released in 1984 this film follows Donald Pleasance and Nancy Allen (Carmie) as they view movie clips and trailers for some of the most iconic horror titles (including *Psycho*, *Halloween* and its sequel). Not a slasher, per se (not even really a movie), but just a really zany concept for a feature that was released theatrically. ... You have plenty more films with oddball set-ups. *Bloody Birthday* (a killer kid movie gone amok), *Motel Hell* (where Farmer Vincent turns customers into crops!), *Curtains* (whose promotional push revolved around a killer doll, while the movie was actually about competing actors who are "at each other's throats"), and *Nail Gun Massacre*: Where construction workers are being killed off by ... you guessed it, a nail gun-loving murderer in a motorcycle helmet! But if you want the ultimate zany slasher, look no further than *Chopping Mall*! Barbara Crampton (*Re-Animator*) stars in this kids-stuck-in-the-mall slasher where the killer is an out-of-control mall security robot! A cult classic through and through, if you've never seen this one, give it a rent, invite your friends over and prepare to laugh the night away! — Kathleen Hazzard

COMPOSING SCREAMS: THE SOUNDS OF THE '80s SLASHERS

by Aaron Crowell

Early one of the most important things to come out of the 1980s was the birth of MTV (Music Television) on August 1st, 1981. The invent of this cable network music video jukebox introduced a new generation to what was hip and trendy in music with packaged programming revolving around the music video. While this groundbreaking visual innovation took root so to did the slasher movie craze across America, reaching its apex in theaters with no less than a dozen stalk-and-slash titles released that very same year. These body count films elevated the level of onscreen violence, showcasing realistic FX driven death scenes while titillating viewers with naked female flesh. In the following years, these horror films became available for video rental, and viewers now

had the option to pause their VCRs during the closing credits to see just who the composers and musicians behind the sounds of these morbid masterpieces (or garbage) were, as it became very clear that it was not just these talented make-up effects artists, actors, writers and directors who were delivering the scares and thrills. The composers and people

responsible for the music that accompanied these titles were now a bigger factor in the equation as music was becoming more and more important with a younger generation of horror-seeking moviegoers. Filmmakers knew this and made a special effort to hire talented music makers to compose scores and compile soundtracks filled with popular bands from nearly every genre of music. Of course vinyl gave way to the cassette tape, much like CDs have given way to downloadable music today. Soundtracks were hot in the '80s, and

deliver a vocally driven musical score for the forced to explain that there was simply not enough money for players, much less a chorus to perform the requested musical piece. Manfredini began to think of a clever alternative to this problem that being inspired by the dialogue at the end of the film where Ms. Voorhees repeats in a high voice "Kill her, Mommy! Kill her!" a line that he altered himself to sound like the now iconic "Ki... Ma... Ki..." as the composer wanted to convey the idea of the, killer hearing voices (and also pinpointed moments of the film in which the killer was on the prowl - much

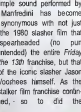
legible in today's secondary market place paired with vinyl's amazing return to store shelves (including larger chains like Best Buy). Some soundtracks featured a compilation of musical acts that, thanks to these films, helped music fans discover their favorite bands and support them for years to come (much like *Guitar Hero* is doing today). Film's scores also introduced fans to composers who have not really received any kind of wide recognition for their body of work in the genre (even if some of them would rather not). Let's now stroll down memory lane and take a look back at the who, what's and what the hells of the scary scores, soundtracks and the people behind the sounds of the '80s slashers... enjoy!

Composition of Kills:

Composer Harry Manfredini kick-started the sound of the '80s slasher boom with his brilliantly written composition for the mother of all iconic '80s slasher films - *Friday the 13th*. Since the picture had a minimal budget and director/producer Sean Cunningham requested he

the picture, the crafty composer was

thanks to the cassette tape could now easily fit in one's back pocket to be played on a boom box or car radio as a reminder of how fun it is to be scared while driving down the road. Officially released musical scores as well as soundtracks to our favorite slasher films on vinyl and cassette have both become highly col-





Composer's connection to the series ending with the 2001 Jason X. Harry Manfieldini also delivered an early similar score for the underrated Slaughter High and the entire House film series.

Just Award winning composer Richard Einhorn has crafted musical offerings for everything from orchestral chamber music to opera, dance numbers, film scores and soundtracks. Horror fans should know him best for his hauntingly effective layered, and down right eerie, score for horror cult classic dating back to 1977 with Ken Wiederholm's Nazi zombie title Shock Waves, widely considered his best and most recognizable effort. He moved on to create compositions for a slew of '80 slasher that included Don't Go in the House (1980), Eyes of a Stranger (1981), also by Shock Waves director Ken Wiederholm), The Prowler (1981), Blood Rage (1987) and Sister, Sister (1987). He also scored the deeply disturbing '80s psychological thrillers: Dead of Winter (1987) which starred Roddy McDowall and Mary

Steenburgen, an Arthur Penn-directed remake of My Name is Julia Ross, as well as Closest Land (1991). Einhorn's original music for Closest Land, along with the creative musical supervision of Philip Glass, drives this deeply disturbing picture that only starred a cast of two: the talented Alan Rickman as the ruthless and cunning political interrogator and his accused victim, Madeleine Stowe. In 1986, Einhorn also composed additional music for two episodes ("Florence Bravo" and "Fear of Floating") of George Romero's popular Tales from the Darkside television series. His emotionally powerful music truly pushed the slasher nightmares far beyond the horror and gore seen on the screen.

Other notable composers that had both major and minor impact on the slasher subgenre of the '80s included director John Carpenter's work with Alan Howarth in collaborating on Halloween's sequel score carried over from the original '70s film, utilizing the latest synthesizer techniques, to extended and vary some of the existing themes. Charles Bernstein composed and performed the memorably creepy music for A Nightmare on Elm Street.

Cujo and April Fool's Day. John Beal acted as orchestrator for such films as The Funhouse, Terror in the Isles and the outlandish Killer Party. Arlon Ober delivered scores for such films as Bloody



Birthday, X-Ray and the campy alien romp Nightbeast. Dan Wyman composed original music for the Linda Blair slasher Hell Night and The Dead Pit. While Ralph Jones delivered music for the feminist slasher The Slumber Party Massacre. The most interesting '80s body count composition being that of Tony Maylam's The Burning score and soundtrack both composed, produced and performed by London progressive



rock band member Rick Wakeman of Yes, with Alan Brewer, as the soundtrack first was released in '81 by Charisma Records and then the score to the film was released in '82 by Varese Sarabande Records, with varying cover art the latter of which also featured the corrected spelling of Brewer's last name. The soundtrack, like many, was available internationally (as seen on the previous page) under the alternate title, Carnage. It should be very obvious to those who are fans of Yes that Wakeman is behind the composition as the carried over keyboard sound is quite recognizable in the score.

Compiling the Body Count:

Original ballads were commonly created for slasher films that appeared to be pre-existing melodies straight from the radio. These often had, yet catchy, tunes served their purpose in according the gentle intro or somber closing credits in some '80s slashers. A perfect example is the ballad titled "Melissa" from the '83 film Sweet Sixteen courtesy of singer Frank Sparks. This unforgettable song was released on the Regency LP soundtrack accompanied by

other tracks by several different artists. Soundtrack compilations often were comprised of similarly styled genres of music to fit the mood of the picture, with metal and punk

rock becoming more prevalent in horror with each passing year. Rocker Alice Cooper (or Vincent Daimon Fumieri) is easily the most famous rocker to bridge this divide as he appeared in several horror films over the years as well as writing music and performing themes for this campy subgenre. Even appearing as Freddy Krueger's twisted staplfather in flashback scenes found in *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare* (1991). Fans of the Friday the 13th series will never forgive or forget "He's Back (The Man Behind the Mask)" performed and written by Cooper who can be seen squaring off against the masked killer in the music video. Both 7" and 12" vinyl singles were produced for this title track accompanied by a B-Side live cut of Cooper's hit song "Billion Dollar Babies." Only the shock rocker was not quite finished with the slasher subgenre yet as he lent his talents as a composer for the soundtrack to the '89 Wes Craven film *Shocker*, titled *Wes Craven's Shocker: No More Mr. Nice Guy: The Music*. This soundtrack album released by SBK/Alive Records featured metal masters Megadeth performing the title track, (a previously written hit song by Cooper) "No More Mr. Niceguy," along with Dudes of Wrath, Dangerous Toys and even a song by punk rock legend Iggy Pop. Varese Sarabande Records also released the *Shocker* score to the film composed by William Goldstein. Varese Sarabande Records is a name well known to soundtrack collectors as they have released a slew of important horror movie scores on vinyl over the years such as: *Dawn of the Dead*, *Phantasm* and *Maniac*. In 1986, I.R.S. Records released the music for the motion picture *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre Part 2* on both vinyl and cassette tape. This compilation of mostly alternative bands included songs played by DJ Vanita "Stretch" Brock (Caroline Williams) during her radio show throughout the film, that included *The Camps* "Goo Goo Muck" and *Oingo Boingo's* "No One Lives Forever."

Another melding of metal and the macabre can be found when hair band Dokken was hired to record the title track for the third installment of the now-popular *A Nightmare on Elm Street* movie series titled *Dream Warriors*. Elektra records released the Dokken "Dream Warriors" single on 12" vinyl, accompanied with the previously unreleased track "Back for the Attack" and "Paris is Burning." A soundtrack composed by Angelo Badalamenti was also released on both vinyl and chrome cassette thanks to Varese Sarabande Records who had previously released the original two film scores on a double LP years prior. As the decade was coming to a



close Freddy Krueger was becoming more of a joke with each passing sequel, as he traded in his kills for comedy. Nothing made this more apparent than when the rap trio known as The Fat Boys were approached to record the theme song for *A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master* in 1988, titled "Are You Ready for Freddy?," which again featured Robert Englund performing as Freddy Krueger on both the song and in full make-up for the music video. This single was released on both 7" and 12" vinyl. Even Will Smith of DJ Jazzy Jeff & The Fresh Prince attempted to capitalize on the success of Freddy and his hit film series with their rap song titled "A Nightmare on My Street," but right before the music video could premiere,

New Line Cinema, as quoted by Jazzy Jeff, "sued the daylight out of us," leading to a settlement on behalf of New Line... the video remains lost to this day. Only Freddy had one more track up the sleeve of his red and green sweater as an album titled *Freddy's Greatest Hits* was released by RSC Records in 1987. Performed by The Elm Street Group that was comprised of Stephanie Davery, Kevin Kelly, Neil Posner, and let us not forget,

Robert Englund as Freddy Krueger

who can be heard throughout this silly album yelling and cracking jokes, featuring cover songs like Wilson Pickett's "In the Midnight Hour" and the Everly Brothers' "All I Have to Do is Dream" other songs titles included: "Do the Freddy" and "Down in the Boiler Room." You can't help but laugh out loud at the utter stupidity of this release. I did notice my cat seemed to like it, so who knows, maybe it was not meant for humans. This album stands as irrefutable evidence as to how and why the slasher boom was taking a nose dive leading to its indisputable demise at the close of the '80s.

Special thanks to Dennis Pinno, Dan Schutte, Matt Moore, Jan Kitley and Joe Wallace.



"MAD MODEL MAKER" CONTEST 2009

MONSTER GAMES
"WINNERS"

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As the last days of summer 2009 waned away, the season of sunny bluesiness surrendering to the descent of a more brooding fall, the dauntless and demented Dr. Deadly chose to entertain an audience of would-be apprentices. Accomplished in various acts of barbarous lecher and sinister surgery, the evil doctor invited a group of wild! but savvy artisans to try their hand at monstrous mayhem.

By way of the "Mad Model Maker" competition, the doctor carefully surveyed those who would defile in the dreary, tread in the path of unrepentable offense, and violate in his realm of Monster Games horror. Compelled to see who truly possessed the "right stuff," Dr. Deadly discovered that some who had subtlety invidiously inventive creations might well stand shoulder-to-shoulder to him in his dungeon of dread. He conferred with his accomplices, Menace Models and HorrorHound Magazine, to confirm his assessments.

Of the many brave souls who dared compete, nine were deemed most worthy of diabolical distinction. All who offered their horrifying handwork were competent, indeed, yet these select individuals and two-person teams demonstrated an innate inclination for all things unseemly.

Look upon them, if you can, to see how lucky you are that these creations are no longer loose upon the streets – maybe yours. No, they've now been incarcerated in Dr. Deadly's virtual dungeon at www.MonsterGames.net where they'll continue their venal work ... forever!

Maybe next time, you'll join them? – Dennis Price



Winners received a special award of distinction, as well as a prize pack. First and second place winners received an exclusive Gold Pendulum!



"Insect Encounter"
by Ed Ropke

1ST PLACE
ADULT & ADJ.
WINNER



"Dr. Deadly's
Hell Museum"
by Joseph
Bello



"Dr. Deadly and
Friends" by Gary
McAloon and
Gordon Mitchell

1ST PLACE
ADULT & ADJ.
WINNER



"An Axe to Grind"
by Annette Ervin
and Brandon
Fowers

2ND PLACE
ADULT & ADJ.
WINNER



"Remorized
Tents" by
Gary Evans



1ST PLACE
ADULT & ADJ.
WINNER

"Dr. Deadly's Pit of Terrors"
by Rob Mattison



"No Place to Hide"
by John Kriousek

3RD PLACE
ADULT & ADJ.
WINNER



Left: "Terror of
Frankenstein"
by Ramsey and
Rob Mattison

"Stripped" by
Yasuko Hase

3RD PLACE
ADULT & ADJ.
WINNER

3RD PLACE
ADULT & ADJ.
WINNER

On December 17th, 2009 the world lost one of the most influential creators in modern cinema with the passing of Dan O'Bannon. The screenwriter of such films as *Alien*, *Dead and Buried*, *Lifeforce* and *Total Recall* - Dan is most well known by horror fans as the creator and director of the 1985 punk zombie classic, *Return of the Living Dead*. After a long battle, Dan finally passed away due to complications from Crohn's disease. While celebrities such as Bessie Arthur, Walter Cronkite or Ed McMahon received national attention for their achievements and impact on pop culture after their passing (and rightfully so), it is with great aggravation that genre icons such as Stan Winston and Paul Naschy are ignored by mass media. Their work is priceless in a world that would be altered for the worst without their amazing vision and contributions to cinema. It is because of this that we at *HorrorHound* recognize the importance of giving tribute to these heroes of Hollywood. Without the work of Winston, Naschy, and especially Dan O'Bannon - this publication would never have existed.

After high school, Dan O'Bannon went to USC where he met fellow filmmaker John Carpenter. They collaborated on a short film titled *Dark Star*, which was eventually expanded upon and released as a feature film. O'Bannon moved into the digital FX world - briefly working with George Lucas on *Star Wars*, and was also attached to *Dune*.

Completely broke, O'Bannon worked with Ronald Shusett on the script for *Alien*, a new sci-horror hybrid developed by Ridley Scott in 1979. Two years later O'Bannon helped create the cult classic animated feature *Heavy Metal* - writing two segments (*Soft Landing* and *B-17*). After working on a blunder of a feature known as *Blue Thunder* with writer Don Jakoby, the two later collaborated on a new screenplay known as *Lifeforce*, which was filmed and released by Tobe Hooper in 1985. *Lifeforce* merged sci-fi once again with horror as a race of space vampires find their way to Earth. A box office failure at the time, the film is often regarded by horror fans as a true diamond in the rough.

Another underrated title in O'Bannon/Shusett's catalog was that of *Dead and Buried* (1981), directed by Gary Sherman (*Potterville* II). Starring Jack Albertson (Charlie and the Chocolate Factory), *Dead and Buried* focuses on the small town of Potter's Bluff where a local police officer is investigating the death and disappearance (and reappearance) of a visiting photographer. A genre essential for anyone who has never had the pleasure of viewing the film (it even boasts one of Robert Englund's first movie appearances and early FX work by master Stan Winston).

In 1984 O'Bannon was tasked with the job of writing *Return of the Living Dead* (for 3-D) - an alluded sequel to the George Romero/John Russo classic, *Night of the Living Dead*. In fact, the film was licensed off the book (of the same name) written by John Russo years earlier. The financiers decided the story wasn't strong enough for screen and O'Bannon was brought onboard to start from scratch, utilizing the film's name only. With Hooper originally attached to direct, O'Bannon wrote the script with the supposed-director in mind - only to find out that Hooper was removed from the project to focus on *Lifeforce*. It was also around this time that O'Bannon was brought on to pen the script to *Invasion from Mars* (a remake of the classic 1953 film). In fact, O'Bannon was teamed-up with Jakoby once again to pen the *'Invasion'* remake. Under fire (and loaded with work), O'Bannon stepped in as *Return of the Living Dead*'s director (sans the 3-D) and a horror classic was born. *Return of the Living Dead* went on to become a success and spawned two sequels (and two more unofficial sequels in the 2000s).

In 1990 O'Bannon (along with Ronald Shusett) developed the screenplay for *Total Recall* (adapted from the Philip K. Dick story, "We Can Remember It for You Wholesale"). A project the duo worked on since the early '80s, the picture was directed by Paul Verhoeven and starred Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sharon Stone. The film was a phenomenal hit, drawing over \$100 million at the box office.



by Nathan Hannerston

For this issue, in addition to honoring the works of Dan O'Bannon, we wished to print part of an interview conducted by writer Jessica Dwyer back in 2008 for our fourth issue, in which we presented a special *Return of the Living Dead* retrospective. Below are excerpts from the interview as he candidly discusses his film career, with emphasis on *Return of the Living Dead*. Please enjoy:

HorrorHound: How were you first brought on board the *Return of the Living Dead* project?

Dan O'Bannon: Well, Tobe Hooper was going to direct it. Tobe and I had the same lawyer, and Tobe asked if I could write it. There was a pre-existing script by John Russo and company, but I didn't care for it. Tobe didn't care for it and he'd gone to a lot of trouble to acquire the rights to this title, but we're going to do something new. Basically what I did was spend a lot of time talking to Tobe and seeing what he wanted to have in the picture and figuring out what he'd be good at, what he'd be bad at, so I would avoid writing that. The idea of doing it as a black comedy came fairly early. Both of us liked it, and we ran with it. I wrote it to both Tobe's strengths. Then Cannon approached us about a project based off of the Colin Wilson book *The Space Vampires* (*Lifeforce*). He approached me to script it and approached Tobe to direct it. So Tobe left "Return," pool I brought Don Jakoby in to help write the "Vampires" script. While we were doing that, the producers of *Return* asked me if I wanted to direct it. I

wasn't entirely thrilled, though, because I had tailored this to Tobe's strengths as a director and not mine. I went ahead and did the best I could that I had tailored to another director.

HH: From what I understand the first edit had the first half as comedy, and then the second half was straight up horror. It was then cut to be more of an even mix?

DO: No, no, except for that last incoherent flurry of the end and under the titles, that is my cut. As soon as the bomb goes off, though, the picture becomes momentarily incoherent and starts repeating scenes from the film. That's all the producers. If I was going to make a straight horror movie, I'd do my best to scare the audience. If I'm going to make it a comedy horror movie, I'm going to be walking a certain line. At a certain point, when we were well into shooting, after doing a funny scene or two, if I don't give them a bad turn somewhere they are going to crucify me. So I'd go and raise the things level there. But it had never been planned for competition for *Alien*; I'd never planned to take the audience to its threshold of shock and horror or anything. I wanted to give the audience a few scary bumps, so the thing didn't start to seem toothless or impotent.

HH: How do you feel about all the new zombie films coming out now [2006], sort of like a resurgence of the genre?

DO: It seems to be a genre that people can do a lot of work in. It's one of those things that lots of filmmakers working at different budgetary levels can constantly ... you can work through anything you want, just make it a zombie. Science fiction had that property at one time. You could tell any story you wanted as long as it was sci-fi. And now that's proving true with zombies.

HH: And nothing like that has happened in reality, so there's no basis really.

DO: Well, plenty of disasters have happened in reality. A disaster is a disaster, and when things get to a certain point, people start yelling and running into each other. People in a major disaster, people don't act ignobly. That was Hollywood's thing, for a while. Something would happen, and people would act like shit. Well, we've had a few disasters now, and people pull together and act rather well. And indeed, in my picture, they don't behave ignobly, but they do behave foolishly. They do get panicky and overreacted, and they do run into each other.



AMERICAN PSYCHO



2004, Shark City was located at 117 Eglinton Avenue East in Toronto. Later, Mr. Bateman takes a not-quite-casual lunch

The adaptation of Bret Easton Ellis' book *American Psycho* from page to screen is quite the saga to tell. At one point Johnny Depp was attached to play Patrick Bateman with Stuart Gordon directing, and next Brad Pitt was going to play Bateman with David Cronenberg directing. Then Mary Harron was hired to direct, and she proposed the part of Bateman to Edward Norton, who turned it down. She then offered the role to Christian Bale who accepted, Lions Gate then announced that Leonardo DiCaprio would be playing the role of Patrick Bateman, and Harun resigned in protest. Oliver Stone signed on as director with DiCaprio as Bateman, James Woods in the role of Donald Kimball and Cameron Diaz as Evelyn Williams. ... DiCaprio eventually passed on the film, not wanting to endanger the teen star status he acquired after the mega hit *Titanic*. And finally, re-entered Mary Harron and her choice for the part of Patrick Bateman, Christian Bale.

The film was shot in 1999 on a budget of \$7 million. The film is supposed to take place in New York City in 1987, but for the most part was filmed in downtown Toronto Canada. Our first location is Patrick Bateman's apartment, located on the 11th floor of the fictitious American Gardens Building on West 81st Street in Manhattan.

The immaculate cold white apartment with the stainless steel kitchen was a set built for Paul Allen's apartment.



The locations in this film are mostly bars and restaurants, so let's start there. When Patrick fails to score a reservation at the legendary Dorsia (the fictitious location we actually never see in the film), he takes his doped-up date to Barcadia instead.

Barcadia is actually the Pacific Rim restaurant Monsoon located at 100 Simcoe Street in downtown Toronto. Sadly, the day I visited this location there was a notice of eviction posted on the door stating it had closed down just two days prior.

Later, Bateman picks up a model at a



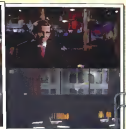
hip dance club (with a bathroom that sucks to do coke in) which is actually the Phoenix Concert Theatre located at 410 Sherbourne Street in Toronto. Upstairs at the Phoenix is the balcony lounge where Bateman and friends talk to the models.

Texarkana, the Mexican-style restaurant where Bateman meets Paul Allen for dinner, is actually Montana located at 145 John Street in downtown Toronto.

The restaurant in which Patrick dumps his fiancée, played by Reese Witherspoon at the time of filming was called Shark City until it closed down in



with detective Donald Kimball played by Willem Dafoe. Kimball has some further questions about Bateman's whereabouts on the night of Paul Allen's disappearance. They dine at the French restaurant



The Savoy located at 253 Victoria Street in downtown Toronto. When I visited this location it was closed for remodeling.

Bateman and the boys lounge around drinking expensive cognac having a good time until Luis Carruthers, played by Matt Ross, breaks up the fun by presenting them with his brand new near-perfect business card. This was filmed at Le Méridien King Edward Hotel's Consort Bar located at 37 King Street West in downtown Toronto.



There are a few scenes shot in New York, besides the basic stock coverage seen in the film from time to time. The



corner where Bateman picks up the prostitute he calls Christy was shot in New York's Meat Packing District.

Another important iconic New York shot is one of Bateman crossing the street in front of the Twin Towers in Manhattan.

After Bateman shoots the woman for disagreeing with his attempt to feed the ATM machine a later, he is first running through the streets on New York City near the Rector Street Station located at the corner of Rector Street and Trinity Place in lower Manhattan.

He then runs around the corner and is in downtown Toronto. This is where the police shoot out took place on Pearl Street between Simcoe and Duncan, just around the corner from the previously-mentioned Monsoon.

Next, Bateman heads into to what he thinks is his office building. Once he enters





he realizes that he has run into an almost identical building next door to his. This upsets him, so he shoots the front desk security guard



Lastly, we end where the film comes to a close, Harry's Bar. This is where Patrick confesses to his lawyer. In reality, this upper crust bar is called Bff's, located at 4 Front Street East in downtown Toronto. Sadly, it was closed when I got there, but as you can see from the pictures below the front door is right behind Bateman with its very recognizable window above it



Well, I hope you enjoyed this look inside the decadent world of Patrick Bateman. I'm off to return some videotapes 📼



The buildings in reality are the Toronto-Dominion Centre located in the heart of the Central Business District of Toronto, at the southwest corner of King and Bay streets. The area occupies an entire city block, from King to Bay to Wellington to York streets, as well as a section to the south of King street between Wellington and Piper streets (between Bay and York Streets). Another unique fact about



this location is that its architect, Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe, also built the nearly-identical Seagram Building in Manhattan which makes this Toronto location the perfect stand-in for New York City.

These two buildings are by far my favorite locations from the film because they are exactly as they appear in the film both physically and geographically. Once he shoots the janitor, he exits the first building and runs across the courtyard into the correct building.



Bateman heads up the elevator and to his office, which we see several times in the film. The office was a studio set built in Toronto.



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Going Straight to Hell: Dante's Inferno, The Video Game

• By Jessica Dwyer

XBOX 360



Transforming classic literature into video games has been practiced since the early days of Atari. *Dracula*, *Frankenstein*, *The Bible*... they've been digitized all the way up to the modern formats of Playstation and XBOX. And horror titles are prime pickings for game makers. As stated, *Dracula* and *Frankenstein* are major inspirations for console and PC systems. These stories are seemingly a lot easier to translate to games. They've been told and retold in various versions of film and books already, so they lend themselves more readily to the realm of gaming.

But one tale filled with images of bloody horror and the supernatural that has never been translated into the land of the joystick was *Dante's Inferno* (one part

of the Divine Comedy). This is partly because the scope and imagery is epic. *The Odyssey* is one of the few works of writing that can compare to *Dante's Inferno*, and yet the *Inferno* still towers in comparison.

Dante Alighieri wrote the epic tale of a journey through hell, heaven, and purgatory as both a religious and political statement. But its story and the descriptions it contains are to this day still unnerving in their attention to detail. Not only that, but *Dante's Inferno* also comes as a ready made set of levels for a rabid gamer to battle through in a quest for salvation, which is what Electronic Arts and Visceral Games (makers of the awesome *Dead Space* series) have done.

Dante's Inferno the video game, which hit shelves in February, takes the masterpieces of Alighieri and puts a new spin on the old tale of a man looking for peace and repentance for the sins he's committed. It utilizes Dante's descriptions of hell and its minions. The story also takes the real man behind the poem, Dante himself, and uses him as the inspiration for the story. In this new version of the *Inferno*, Dante is a knight who has committed terrible deeds in the name of the king and broken vows made to his true love Beatrice. On a path to hell, he defies death and Satan's armies in battle to save Beatrice's soul, and his own, from the Devil's clutches.

Dante's character is complex. He's a fallen hero who has stitched a tapestry showing all the sins he's committed, threaded into his own flesh. Beatrice, the angelic woman he loves, urges him on through the many levels of hell. Her soul will be forever lost if our hero fails, as Satan wants a pure soul. Dante in the game, as well as in the original work, is guided by the poet Virgil. Virgil's spectral form leads him along the dark and bloody path he must go through, horrifically created within the game.

Each level of hell uses the descriptions from the poem in their creation, and also has its own specific boss character (as, the level for the sin of lust features Cleopatra

as its ruler and boss). Historical characters abound in the game and guide Dante and sometimes, as in the case of Cleopatra, fight him on his journey. As for the game play itself, it has a *God of War* feel. There are puzzles to solve and certain actions needed to be done within a time limit for them to work.

The title's release is not just tied to the game itself. EA and Visceral are creating an entire mass media campaign of tie-ins to celebrate its hitting shelves. There is a comic book being released by DC/Vertigo that follows the story. The studio has partnered with NECA and released a Dante action figure (which pre-orders for the game received for free). A release of the original *Dante's Inferno* story (book) is also being released including photos from the game and artwork. One of the most exciting tie-ins though is the release of the *Dante's Inferno* film/animation. Touted as an animated epic, like *Gotham Knights*, there are multiple directors as well as multiple animated styles for the tales that are told. A total of six top anime directors tell stories that cover all the levels of hell and follow Dante on his path.

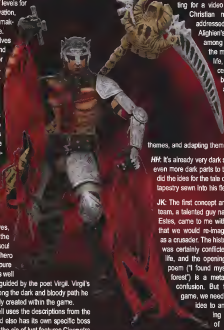
One of the reasons the game is put together and marketed so well is Jonathan Knight, the executive producer of *Dante's Inferno*. Knight has been working in the industry since 1994 and has been attached to games like *The Sims*, *Star Trek*, and *Wolfenstein* just to name a few. He's worked at companies like Interplay and Activision before coming to EA. Jonathan took the time to answer questions about this awesome new entry into some of the darkest subject matter to ever grace a Playstation.

HorrorHound: *Dante's Inferno* is one of the major classics of literature and would seem a very intimidating project to undertake. Did you and your team feel a lot of pressure over what you were attempting since it is such a celebrated classic?

JK: We were really interested in the concept of Hell as a setting for a video game, and specifically the medieval Christian mythos, which hasn't really been addressed directly in games and movies. Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* is widely regarded among scholars as the definitive synthesis of the medieval world's conception of the afterlife, and so the poem quickly became the center of our focus. Upon reading, it became clear that Dante's vision of hell as a real place, made up of nine concentric rings descending to the center of the earth, with monsters and guardians, was the perfect setting. So we set about taking the environments, characters, stories, and themes, and adapting them for an action game.

HH: It's already very dark subject matter, and you've added some even more dark parts to the story with Dante's tragic life. Where did the idea for the tale of the disgraced knight come from? The tapestry sewn into his flesh is also a nice touch.

JK: The first concept artist on the team, a talented guy named John Estes, came to me with this idea that we would re-imagine Dante as a crusader. The historical Dante was certainly conflicted about his life, and the opening line of the poem ("I found myself in a dark forest") is a metaphor for that confusion. But for the video game, we needed to take that idea to an extreme, giving him a past full of sin and trans-





gression, so that he would face those sins in Hell. The disastrous, bloody, and morally bankrupt setting of the Third Crusade gave us a foothold, as well as the beginning of a costume. So we ran with it.

HH: What inspired the style used for this game? I like the way the tapestry comes to life, it reminds me a lot of the beginning of Bram Stoker's Dracula. And the comic book is beautiful.

JK: Thanks! We always liked the idea of mixing 2-D and 3-D with the storytelling. ... *Kill Bill* comes to mind as a movie that does this in a really interesting way. Other games do it, but what was important to us is that the transition between styles be motivated - and that's what the tapestry sewn into his chest is all about. That tapestry contains the sins

of his past, which he himself has sewn into his flesh, and the camera zooms into those scenes and they come to life in an animated graphic novel style. For the style itself, as well as the comic, we wanted a messy, corrupted style with loose lines and a dark tone.

HH: You are releasing an animated collection of tales tied into the game which is becoming a trend with a lot of releases. But yours is different in that it has more than one director. How did the directors choose which part of hell they wanted to focus on, and do each of the stories match what happens in the game?

JK: Visceral supervised all of the creative on the animated feature, in partnership

with Film Roman. We had over a dozen directors submit concepts for the movie, and then matched the styles with the circles of hell we thought would be most appropriate. We're really pleased with how it came out.

HH: Dante's getting the full treatment; figure, comic, tie-in film. How difficult is it for you and your team to try and control all aspects of this to make sure everything stays quality?

JK: It takes a lot of work! Fortunately, we have a really top-notch producer named Cate Lutzford who works centrally for all of Visceral's games. Cate was involved in *Dead Space*'s ancillary products as well, and is very much the gate-keeper. We also are lucky to work with exceptional partners like NECA, Sideshow Collectibles, DC Comics, etc., who understand the importance of quality and consistency across the property.

HH: There was some controversy the game stirred up due to its religious overtones and the amount of blood and gore/horror that it contains. Have you had anything else occur in the way of actual protesting from religious groups?

JK: To be perfectly honest, there hasn't been any objection from any official groups, other than the Nanny Association, who did not share our sense of context over one of the achievements in the game. The game (and the poem) is really so fantastical, so fictional in nature, that most people understand what we're doing. It may not be for everyone, but the story actually has a fairly positive message behind it. At the end of the day, it's a story of redemption. ☸



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THEY CAME FROM THE KRYPT!

by den Rittler

Hammer Thriller Double Feature

Back in *HorrorHound* #12, we learned what gialos were and of their influence on the slasher films of the '50s. But even before those Italian exercises in style and violence arose, there was a type of subgenre called "thrillers." This issue, we're going to cover a couple black and white thrillers from a studio known for its reputation of doing colorful blood and gore. But first, a little history lesson:

Like a second-cousin to the detective/mystery film genre, the thriller was meant to not only keep you guessing, but also keep you on the edge of your seat. Calling it a "thriller" was also an easy way for Hollywood studios to label a film meant to frighten viewers, minus the negative connotations applied to the "horror" label (a philosophy that still applies today).

Thrillers/Mysteries/Suspense offerings have been popular as long as the medium of cinema itself. But in 1960, all that changed with the release of Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*. It had all the suspense, mystery, and thriller aspects of its predecessors, but with one significant difference: it was an out-and-out horror film. While credit must certainly be given to director Henri-Georges Clouzot, who had made a big impression five years earlier with the

the *Mummy's Tomb* (1971), but died shortly after production started (directorial chores were completed by Michael Carreras).

The second film on our slate is the third in Hammer's black and white psycho-thriller series, *Paranoid* (1963), starring Janette Scott and a young Oliver Reed. The film occurs on the eighth anniversary of a couple's tragic death, whose passing left their three children (Tony, Simon and Eleanor) in the care of their aunt.

Shortly after his parents' demise, Tony apparently committed suicide. Now in their early 20s, Eleanor has become very fragile since the loss of her favorite brother, while Simon spends most of his time drinking and causing trouble in town, waiting for his 21st birthday, so he can take full control of his inheritance. But on this present day get-together in remembrance of their lost parents, Eleanor turns to see ... her long lost brother, Tony, or at least she thinks she does.

Fearing she is going crazy, Eleanor tries to kill herself but is saved by Tony, apparently alive and in the flesh. But Tony's return sparks suspicions among the family members, and as the viewer, even we're not sure if it is really him or an imposter. The more we learn, however, the darker the story becomes.

Paranoid was directed by Freddie Francis, who had recently won a Best Cinematography Oscar for 1960's *Sons and Lovers*, and would later win another for the Civil War epic *Glory* (1989). He had only



suspenseful *Les Diaboliques* (1955), his French art-house smash didn't carry the same blood impact and mainstream appeal of Hitchcock's film. Once *Psycho* hit the screens, everyone was running out to make their own type of "psycho-thriller." Hammer Films, the reigning champs of British horror, were no different.

Jimmy Sangster, key screenwriter (among other things) for Hammer, was getting tired of the Gothic pictures that Hammer was cranking out and started to write scripts for other studios. One script in particular, written under the title *Red Heat No Fury*, was heavily influenced by the previously mentioned Hitchcock and Clouzot titles. Originally sold to another producer, Sangster bought it back when the project began looking uncertain and sold the script to Hammer - with the stipulation that he could produce it as well. They readily agreed, changing the title to *Taste of Fear* (which then became *Scream of Fear* when released in the States). Though the studio wanted to shoot in color, Sangster fought to keep it black and white: a choice which works beautifully, the contrast of light and dark notably enhancing the film's mood.

Scream of Fear (1961) deals with a wheelchair-bound young woman coming home after many years to see her father and stepmother. Once she arrives and finds her father is "away on business," we soon suspect that something is not right. With the help of the family chauffeur, she starts to unravel the mystery around her missing father. This was the first of Hammer's psycho-thrillers and really set the bar high. Beside Sangster's great script, the superb acting sells it even more so. We don't want to spoil the ending, so we suggest not reading too much about the film prior to seeing it.

Directed by Seth Holt, *Scream of Fear* stars Susan Strasberg, Ronald Lewis and Hammer regular Christopher Lee. Lewis, who fans might remember from William Castle's *Mr. Sardonicus* (1951), died from an apparent suicide at the age of 54. Holt went on to direct *The Mummy* (1965) for Hammer, another black and white thriller starring Bette Davis, and began filming on *Blood from*

directed two previous features (in addition to some uncredited scenes for 1962's *Day of the Triffids*) when Hammer gave him a chance on this film. He would go on to direct many horror efforts for Hammer, and other studios as well.

Hammer had a lot of problems getting the original script passed by the BBFC due to its incestuous themes, overt or slight, depending on how much you really read into it. There are comments made by Simon to his aunt that could be construed into other, darker meanings, and scenes of Eleanor staring to fall for her brother made the BBFC a little too uncomfortable and needed to be toned down quite a bit.

Hammer went on to make even more of these thrillers, such as *Maniac* (1963), *Nightmare* (1964), and *Hysteria* (1965), moving into color thrillers like *Dial Dial My Darling!* (1965) and *Crescendo* (1970). While some of them were pretty good, none had the impact of *Scream of Fear* and *Paranoid*. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't give them a try. Experience the beauty of black and white films and the talented use of light and shadow, but be careful as you do - you just might Discover the Horror! 🖤



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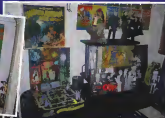
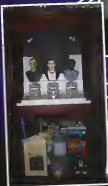
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FANTASY COLLECTOR'S SPOTLIGHT: Omar Najera

This issue's Fantasm was submitted by three brothers, Raul, Adrian and Darren. "After growing up with him the past 24 years, we think our brother Omar Najera, has a collection that we hope is worthy of appearing in an issue of your awesome magazine. He's been a fan of the horror genre since we can remember. His prized possessions are his Universal Monsters DVD collection, as well as replicas of the Disneyland Haunted Mansion hitchhiking ghosts, specifically Ezra, whom he picked up along the way upon exiting the Disney attraction, taking him all the way home. Over the years he's amassed various horror literature, board games, DVDs, VHS tapes, CDs, posters, issues of *Horrorhound*, *Tales from the Crypt* comic books, and horror figures in various scales and from diverse horror properties." - The Najera Brothers.

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NEXT ISSUE

Next issue *HorrorHound Magazine* presents an extensive buyer's guide to the Blu-ray disc format as we analyze the best bang for your buck, clever ways to build your collection on a budget, upgrading your BD player, information on upcoming films to the format, technical info - and most importantly - what discs to stay away from! This all-encompassing article comes off the back of Blue Underground's announcement that *City of the Living Dead* will be making its high-def premiere with an all-new transfer of the film and hours of bonus materials that won't be available on DVD! The producer of these bonus features and director of *Paura: Fulci Remembered*, delivers an amazing look into this Italian horror classic, with the most extensive *HorrorHound* retrospective imaginable - including interviews with the cast and crew, tons of merchandise and promotional material featured throughout!

City of the Living Dead is also known under the titles of *Gates of Hell* and even *Twilight of the Dead*. A common headache for films of the time, many movies succumbed to alternate titles - or AKAs (also known as). With varying poster art and promotional materials - furthering the confusion for potential viewers - we take a look at the history of horror AKAs, not just from Italy, but from all around the world. From Jack Hill's *Spider Baby*, *The Prowler* and *The Crazies*, to *Eaten Alive* or *Chopping Mall*. You won't believe some of the alternate titles these films were released (or tested) under.

All these articles, plus our regular features: Movie and DVD News, Horror's Hallowed Grounds, Video Invasion: Remembering the VHS Boom!, and coverage from the 2010 New York Toy Fair (including Diamond's exciting new Universal Monsters products) will be featured in *HorrorHound* #23 - available everywhere this April!

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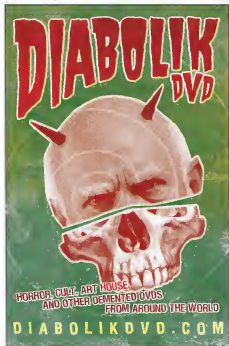
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*See next issue for more show listings.

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HORROR HOUND FANS CHOICE HALL OF FAME PSYCHO

by Robert Aragon

Is the Hitchcock suspense film of 1960 a timeless terror classic worthy of the HorrorHound Hall of Fame? Indubitably! *Psycho* is based on the Joseph Stefano screenplay of a 1959 novel by master suspense writer, Robert Bloch. Bloch had modeled the lead character of his novel, Norman Bates, after real-life 1950s Wisconsin murderer extrajudiciaire, Ed Gein. This Alfred Hitchcock cinematic masterpiece has haunted the public mind for over 50 years and shows no signs of releasing its fearsome hold.

The four-time Oscar nominated film opened to mixed reviews upon its release, but has garnered respect as a work of cinematic art. Not bad for the original "slasher" film... or is this a slasher film? Assuming you have not seen this classic, I shall present you a brief synopsis of the plot. Prepare yourself for the surprise ending.

Marion Crane (Janet Leigh) has stolen \$40,000 from her employer and during a storm finds refuge at the desolated Bates Motel which lies in the foreground of the Bates family's decaying Victorian home. The proprietor is a man-child by the name of Norman Bates, a candy chewing, uncomfortably awkward, and eager to please, young psychopath. Needless to mention, Marion is murdered while in the shower by an anonymous female assailant with a butcher knife. While Marion's mutilated body lies as cascading water purges the evil act, we hear Norman's panic stricken voice yell out, "Mother! Oh God, Mother! Blood!" What has his mother done? Could his dear old gay haired mother be a homicidal murderess? Of course, you all know the shocking finale. Norman is mad, insane - a victim of great emotional abuse at the hands of his loving mother, a woman long since deceased, but to Norman she still exists and lives in his psyche as an alternate personality.

Anthony Perkins' portrayal of Norman Bates is boyishly and gleefully spine-chilling. His performance seems to exude all the best and worst of man's subconscious duality. The quintessential sufferer of a dissociative identity disorder if I ever saw one: Perkins was born in 1932 and left us at the age of 60.

Marion Crane was portrayed by Oscar nominated actress, Janet Leigh. Her character, seems to be a refugee of mainstream America who found solace in the kindness of Norman Bates. She was born in 1927 and passed away in 2004.

Psycho shocked the world out of the post-war innocence by bringing together two worlds. The world of the present, as represented by the Marion Crane, and the world of the past, found in our midst, Norman Bates. The film consciously delivers dialogue between the past and the present as evident in the masterfully scripted parlor room scene, a strange love scene where a vocal dance seems to build between them. Until it's apparent the past represents that which is frightening, decayed and fatal, and the present is all that is cheerful, sexy and new. In many ways, this film marked the turning point of the '60s, from conservative to liberal, from humanism to post-humanism, from implied horror to graphic horror, from privacy to voyeurism.

Marion Crane's shower scene, aside from being a voyeur's delight, is the collision of those aforementioned conflicting worlds. What was to have been a baptismal cleansing of her sin became a violent 45 second act of slaughter caught on film which

involved 78 camera set ups and took one week to film. As graphic as it may seem, there is only one actual penetration of the skin of its vulnerable star, Janet Leigh. The remaining piercings are screams from the violin strings of Bernard Herrmann's effective tension-laden score. *Psycho* gave rise to a strand of American horror movies, most notably, *Halloween* (1978), *Straw-Pluck* (1984), *The House that Screamed* (1986), and *Twitch of the Death Nerve* (1971), which made the horror as literal as the substantial flesh of its victims. As surely as Janet Leigh's character endures a violent death, with the tearing away of her flesh, it is in this "tearing away" that *Psycho* thrusts modernity to the audience who felt comfort in watching a nice old black and white film vehicle.

The world of Norman Bates and his loving mother remained abandoned for 23 years, until *Psycho II* hit the theaters in 1983. Although inferior to the original, it was followed by *Psycho III* (1986) and there was even a failed TV pilot spin-off aptly titled *Bates Motel* (1987). Finally, we saw *Psycho IV: The Beginning* (1990), the later TV film was written by original screenplay author, Joseph Stefano. Anthony Perkins declined to appear in the TV pilot, but was present in the three *Psycho* sequels. Lastly, in 1998 there was a theatrical release which still boggles my mind, a remake of *Psycho*, titled (appropriately enough), *Psycho* - an unfortunate exercise in filmmaking.

It is of no great surprise that I disapprove graphic violence in horror films, unless, the violence is essential to the development of a character or storyline. Violence is essential in this 1960 film. The very nature of Norman Bates has been weaned on violence and abuse. The result is a man riddled with conflicting sexual emotions and an inclination of alienation, human disconnection and horror.

All graphic horror films post-1960 have been influenced by this master work of art. For *Psycho* is the original "slasher" film. The very term seems to echo the downward trend of Norman's bloody knife into its nude victim.

With the counter-culture movement and its drug-induced sense of reality, the slasher film became the horror film. Graphic violence eventually replaced the "old school" world of terror. Unfortunately, as the graphic violence grew in these exploitative "horror" films, an indispensable element had been lost, the human story. For regardless of how violent a production may be, we, as an audience need to feel an inkling of empathy for the villain. If there is no empathy, there is no humanity. If there is no humanity, there is no emotion, and fear is driven by emotion.

Psycho has been studied and dissected as a film more than one could possibly imagine. Its layered psychology is still a mystery and open to individual interpretation. Its fear factor may be as basic as Norman's words to Marion Crane, "We all go a little mad sometimes. Haven't you?" I for one have, and I'm still smiling because of it. So, it is with extreme joy that I welcome *Psycho* into the HorrorHound Hall of Fame. Mother would be proud! 🍷



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